Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

What's your level of confidence that CUC will be able to meet Saipan's demand for power when the Aggreko contract ends in September?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

PANDEMIC ALERT STATUS PHASE 5

As of May 29, 2009

Phase 1: Viruses circulating among animals have yet to cause infections in humans.

Phase 2: An animal influenza virus is causing infection in humans, and is considered a potential pandemic threat.

Phase 3: An animal or human-animal influenza virus has caused sporadic cases or small clusters of disease in people, but has not resulted in human-to-human transmission sufficient to sustain community-level outbreaks.

Phase 4: Verified human-to-human transmission of an animal or human-animal influenza virus able to cause "community-level outbreaks."

Phase 5: A strong signal that a pandemic is imminent and that the time to finalize the organization, communication, and implementation of planned mitigation measures is short.

Phase 6: The pandemic phase, is an indication that a global pandemic is underway.

For more information about the H1N1 flu, contact DPH at 236-8797, Monday to Friday, from 8am to 5pm, 234-8950 during after hours, e-mail cnmipheoc@gmail.com, or visit www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/.

Source: CNMI Department of Public Health, World Health Organization

INSIDE

Spell Champ

Kavya Shivashankar wrote out the word on her palm, smiled, then spelled "Laodicean" to become the nation's spelling champion.

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Sablan wants to show the CNMI's better side. **PAGE 5**

A deafening thunderclap is followed by a huge cloud of smoke about a mile north of the Marpi landfill yesterday, after the detonation of 1,000 lbs of World War II ordnance.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

1,000 lbs of WWII explosives detonated

Members of the CNMI Explosives Response Team, or XRT, and Ampro wait on top of Suicide Cliff for the start of the detonation of 1,000 lbs of World War II ordnance in Marpi yesterday. Two representatives of the Guam-based U.S. Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal Detachment in the Marianas led the detonation.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

A representative from the Guam-based U.S. Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal Detachment in the Marianas sets the remote control while CNMI Emergency Management Office director Joaquin Omar looks on shortly before Omar pushed the remote button to detonate 1,000 lbs of World War II ordnance in Marpi yesterday.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Another 1,000 lbs of World War II ordnance were detonated yesterday at the Laderan Laggun cliff line in Marpi by the U.S. Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal Detachment, with the assistance of the CNMI Explosives Response Team and Ampro.

Shortly after 1pm came the "bird shot"—the detonation of just a few pounds of explosives meant to scare away birds in the area.

This was followed by the major shot—the detonation of war ordnance with a total explosive weight of 1,000 lbs.

The detonation set off a thunderclap, rebounding along the cliff walls and sending a huge cloud of smoke into the still air, about a mile north of the Marpi landfill.

The U.S. EOD team asked CNMI

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CPA goes from 'elevated' to 'moderate' risk status

BY MONETH G. DEPOSA
Moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority has settled a $1.2 million "questioned" administrative cost with the Federal Aviation Administration, prompting the federal agency to amend its rating for CPA from elevated to moderate.

In a notice to CPA on May 23, FAA said it is placing the

See CPA on Page 4

Camacho

9 more cops join discrimination lawsuit vs DPS

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Nine police officers yesterday joined a lawsuit earlier filed by a police official against the Department of Public Safety for alleged discriminatory practices in promoting and hiring police officers.

Joining Police Sergeant James C. Deleon Guerrero's formal grievance/petition for judicial review are Sgt. Anthony Macaranas, Sgt. Joaquin Camacho, Sgt. Elden C. Dela Cruz, Police Officer 3 Frank Pangelinan, Police Officer 3 Sandy Hambros, Police Officer 3 Jesse Concepcion, Police Officer 3 Josepha Guerrero, Police Officer 2 James Rabauliman, and Police Officer 2 Norbert Mettao.

The nine officers joined in Sgt. Deleon

See COPS on Page 4

Local

Water outage set in Fina Sisu today

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has scheduled a water outage in Fina Sisu today, May 30, 2009, from 7:30am to 6:30pm.

The water outage will cover Chalan Tun Antonio Apa, Chalan Tun Joaquin Doi and portions of As Perdido Road (Haigus Ln.), affecting customers residing is these areas.

On Sunday, May 31, 2009, low water pressure will affect customers residing in As Terlaje along Chalan Monsignor Guerrero, Chalan Pale Arnold, Gualo Rai Rd. and Beach Road from 5:30am to 9am.

The CUC Water Division Distribution Maintenance crew is scheduled to work on the Isley Booster I Sump Tank Reservoir to seal all holes and openings, inspect, clean and disinfect the storage tank.

This required work is necessary to protect treated stored water and provide improved overall water quality for public consumption. This work enables the Water Division to comply with the stipulated order concerning drinking water operations and maintenance in correcting major sanitary deficiencies cited during storage tanks inspections. Water service will be restored to affected customers as soon as the work is completed.

Residents are encouraged to practice strict water conservation and to teach children and household workers to save water, especially during this period. Rainwater catchment system/water tanks should be cleaned and float valves installed or replaced to ensure that water does not overflow from any links.

For more information, you may contact Bruce Megarr, Deputy Director for Water & Wastewater Operations, at telephone no. 235-7025 thru 235-7032 Ext. 172. ***(CUC)***

150 homestead lots distributed on Rota

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The Department of Public Lands yesterday granted 150 homestead lots to Rota residents, about a month after 429 homestead lots were distributed on Tinian on April 30.

Gov. Benino R. Fitial, who left for Rota yesterday morning, led the ceremony for the homestead lot distribution, said press secretary Charles P. Reyes Jr.

The governor announced the lot distribution during his State of the Commonwealth Address on Wednesday.

Many applicants in the CNMI have been waiting for years to be granted homestead lots, measuring anywhere between 800 and 1,000 square meters.

It's not clear as of yesterday whether the areas where the newly distributed Rota homestead lots are located have the basic infrastructure such as roads, power, water and wastewater systems.

DPL Secretary John Del Rosario could not be reached for comment.

On Saipan, there are over 3,400 homestead applicants.

ON THE STREET

May is Tourism Month. Have you ever shown your hospitality to a visitor?

"Recently some tourists were walking around and they were lost, so I gave them directions and a ride."
—Vince Sablan

"I always smile at them and say, 'Welcome! *Hafa Adai*!"—all the time!
—Margarita Aldan

"I meet tourists at the Garapan Street Market. I greet them and pull them up to dance. Encouraging them takes their shyness away, and then they just keep dancing!"
—David Omar

Live the Fiesta Way!
Fiesta Resort and SPA Saipan
goes down memory lane with the
RETRO NIGHTS
at the Chambre BAR
Enjoy the music of the 60's 70's and 80's with
MARIO and LORETA every Monday to FRIDAY.
HAPPY HOUR from 5 to 7pm
LIVE BAND MUSIC from 6:30p.m. to 9:15p.m.
SATURDAY KARAOKE 9:15p.m. to 10:00p.m.
For Reservations and inquiry, please Call 234-6414 ext. 1547-1548 or 233-6414
In Cooperation with
Miller Lite
FIESTA Resort & SPA SAIPAN
A TanHoldings Company

Senator presses retroactive salaries for Tinian workers

Past and present Tinian municipal employees have yet to receive half of their retroactive salary payment under the 1991 government salary adjustment law, according to Sen. Jude U. Hofschneider.

Hofschneider has sought information from Tinian Mayor Jose P. San Nicolas on the amount of tax and arrears paid by the Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino deposited into an account and waiting appropriation for employees' retroactive salary adjustment.

Under Tinian Local Law 11-01, one-half of the payment received each month from the Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino for the payment of arrears on license fees and taxes shall be set aside for the payment of the retroactive salary adjustments under Public Law 7-31 for all eligible employees on Tinian, which shall be disbursed in accordance with a future appropriations measure.

"The people of Tinian are experiencing economic difficulties and it is the job of any responsible public servant to exert every available effort to help relieve their burdens. That is exactly what I intend to do," Hofschneider told San Nicolas.

The senator said Section 405 of the local law, which gives the Tinian mayor a "great deal of reprogramming authority," explicitly states that the funds identified "must not be touched."

"Thus, assuming the Dynasty has been remitting the money it owes, there should exist a substantial amount of money that we may appropriate to the people of Tinian to pay their retroactive adjustments," Hofschneider said.

He gave San Nicolas up to June 6, 2009, to share information on the amount of money available for this appropriation. ***(Haidee V. Eugenio)***

Savage attack on new wife gets man 203 days in prison

The CNMI Superior Court has imposed a 203-day prison term on a man who beat up his then newly married wife, resulting in her sustaining multiple injuries.

Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona sentenced Fernando Valentine to five years in prison, all suspended except for 203 days, for attempted aggravated assault and battery.

Following a plea agreement, Manglona gave the 41-year-old Valentine credit for the 203 days he has already served in jail. This means the defendant will be released from the Department of Corrections at once.

He will, however, be placed on five years of supervised probation. He was required to write a letter of apology and have no further altercations with the victim.

Manglona ordered Valentine to pay restitution for any medical expenses incurred by the victim and a total of $125 in fine and court assessment fee.

During the probationary period, the defendant will be barred from drinking alcoholic beverages.

Valentine was also ordered to report to the Community Guidance Center for counseling evaluation.

The Attorney General's Office charged the defendant with assault with a dangerous weapon, and assault and battery. He signed a plea agreement with the government and pleaded guilty to attempted aggravated assault and battery.

The agreement stated that on Oct. 24, 2008, Valentine attempted to cause serious bodily injury to the victim.

According to a police report, Valentine used in the assault many objects—a screw driver, stainless steel chopsticks, a broken computer's jagged end, a pen, and bottle of liquor.

The victim suffered injuries to the face, neck, arms, and legs, police said.

Police said Valentine and the victim had an argument in their house in Chalan Piao that led to the beating. The couple were just married in August 2008.

The defendant reportedly accused the wife of having an affair. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Man arrested for alleged 'ice' trafficking

Police officers arrested on Thursday a man who was allegedly engaged in selling crystal methamphetamine or "ice" on Saipan.

Yan Feng Yu, 29, was brought to the Superior Court yesterday afternoon for a bail hearing on charges of illegal possession of a controlled substance and trafficking of a controlled substance.

Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona imposed a $30,000 cash bail for Yu's temporary liberty.

Preliminary hearing was set for June 4 at 9am. The Public Defender's Office was appointed to represent the defendant.

Detective Steven A. Castro stated in his report that on April 28, 2009, members of the Department of Public Safety's Local Drug Task Force conducted an "ice" buy-bust operation against Yu.

During the operation, Castro said the police's "cooperating source" was able to buy $250 worth of "ice" from Yu at a parking lot of a store in San Jose. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

EPA to host Pacific environment conference on Saipan

HONOLULU—The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Pacific Islands Office, together with the governments of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and American Samoa are hosting a four-day conference, June 22-25, at the Saipan World Resort in Susupe, Saipan.

This year's conference, themed "Climate of Change: Energizing a Sustainable Future for Pacific Islands," will be attended by environmental officials and representatives from the U.S., CNMI, Guam, American Samoa, Republic of Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and other countries in the Pacific.

"The conference will bring together leaders in government, the community and industry from around the Pacific to examine environmental challenges and issues facing the Pacific Islands, such as climate change and implementing alternative energy strategies," said John McCarroll, manager of the EPA Pacific Southwest Region's Pacific Islands Office. "The sessions will discuss efforts toward making a difference in protecting the island environments and will provide island leaders with the latest ideas and tools on preserving fragile ecosystems."

CONTACT INFO

For conference questions:

- Nuria Muñiz at (415) 972-3811, muniz.nuria@epa.gov;
- Michael Mann at (415) 972-3505 mann.michael@epa.gov

For information on exhibit and sponsorship opportunities:

- Fran Castro at 670-664-8500, or francastro@deq.gov.mp

For additional information and registration:

- www.regonline.com/PIEC2009

The agenda will focus on a wide range of topics, including:

- CNMI Energy Summit and alternative energy options for the islands;
- Adapting to climate change impacts;
- Increasing sustainable and green infrastructure efforts;
- Tips for increasing community and non-governmental activities to protect the environment;
- Success stories on improving the environment in the Pacific;
- Water and wastewater infrastructure issues;
- The latest efforts to address solid waste and recycling in the Pacific; and
- Protecting coral reefs.

The conference will include a CNMI Energy Summit, co-sponsored by the CNMI Energy Division, and other pre-conference workshops on June 22; the main conference program and working sessions for the EPA, territorial environmental, utility, and public works agencies runs from June 23 to 25. ***(EPA)***

OIA again declares American Samoa 'high risk'

PAGO PAGO, America Samoa (Samoa News/PIR)—The U.S. Department of Interior's Office of Insular Affairs has informed Congress in its fiscal year 2010 budget submission that American Samoa remains at "high risk".

Additionally, American Samoa must meet a certain time frame in providing necessary financial reports as part of provisions of the Revised Fiscal Reform Plan.

According to the budget document, OIA provides grant funds to American Samoa for operation of the local government including the judiciary. And for FY 2010, which begins on Oct. 1, 2009, budget request for operations grant stands at $22.7 million which includes $21.8 million for general operations (this includes funds for LBJ hospital) and $855,000 for the High Court.

OIA says ASG does not have sufficient local revenues to fund the entire operating costs of its government and the purpose of this program activity is to fund the difference between budget needs and local revenues.

DOI defines "budget needs" as the cost of maintaining current programs and services.

The operational funding does not include the $9.3 million being requested for American Samoa under the capital improvement projects (see last Thursday's story for more details).

OIA said it has been monitoring ASG's progress on its Fiscal Reform Plan (Revised July 2004)—submitted in compliance with the 2002 memorandum of agreement (MOA) between ASG and DOI—and ASG has continued to provide the required information.

OIA says the fiscal position of the ASG greatly improved from FY 2002 through FY 2004; however, the major sources of revenue were from nonrecurring activities such as insurance payments, loans, and collections of outstanding taxes and other amounts owed to ASG.

Although ASG has reported an increasing surplus for FY 2005 (audited) and FY 2006 (unaudited), "indications are that problems still exist due to unrealistic budget projections and collection shortfalls," it says.

The reports notes that while ASG has done many of the steps in the Plan, there is still "an insufficient impact on the reduction of operational costs" that will cause the ASG to exhaust its surpluses.

It is OIA's goal to help ASG in developing and implementing fiscal reforms that will have a long-term effect on ASG's financial management practices and result in a more responsive and accountable government, OIA explained.

According to the budget document, "the willingness of the ASG to implement recommendations that are designed to help ensure a healthy financial position is taken into account in OIA's process of allocating grant funds."

High risk

In an effort to improve accountability for federal funds, OIA informed Congress it designated American Samoa as a "high-risk" grantee as provided in federal regulations and as recommended by the General Accounting Office and the Office of Inspector General.

This designation allows OIA to require American Samoa grantees to comply with special conditions for future or existing grants, it says.

The special conditions may include: payment of grant funds on a reimbursable basis, withholding of approval to proceed from one project phase to another until receipt of acceptable evidence of current performance, additional project monitoring, and requiring the grantee to obtain technical or management assistance.

The "high-risk" designation will be removed once the ASG is in compliance with each of the following conditions:

■ the ASG shall have completed Single Audits by the statutory deadline for the two most recent consecutive years, resulting in opinions that are not disclaimed and do not contain qualifications that OIA determines in its reasonable discretion to be material; * the ASG shall have a balanced budget, as confirmed by independent auditors, for the two most recent consecutive years, without regard for nonrecurring windfalls such as insurance settlements; and

■ the ASG shall be in substantial compliance with the memorandum of agreement and the Fiscal Reform Plan.

OIA overview

OIA says its various programs work to improve the standard of living for island residents and promote the economic development and self sufficiency of the insular areas.

OIA will achieve its mission by encouraging development, promoting sound financial management practices in insular government and increasing federal responsiveness to the unique needs of the island communities.

Although the budget request is focused primarily on the upcoming fiscal year, OIA says it is framed by long-term security interest of the U.S. in the western Pacific and Caribbean and serious economic and fiscal problems impacting the U.S. territories.

"Each [territory] faces constraints that mainland communities generally do not have, and they face those constraints in geographically isolated areas," said OIA.

"The territories need imaginative solutions, and OIA will continue to work to provide them. We will continue to promote economic development efforts and will refined our efforts to allow existing federal loan programs to be directed to island projects. Not all the solutions require grant funds, but the private sector financial markets may require federal commitment to support infrastructure investment," said OIA.

It appears the budget proposal was prepared and submitted to Congress prior to the announcement that COS Samoa Packing was leaving at the end of September.

COPS

From Page 1

Guerrero's request to have a formal desk audit and corrective measures to ensure fair treatment and compliance with personnel rules and regulations for civil-service employees within DPS.

Sgt. Dela Cruz, who is currently off-island on deployment, joined in the court action through his attorney-in-fact.

Police Officer 2 Jackson Jack was included on the list of joiners, but he later backed out.

In his court action, Sgt. Deleon Guerrero asked the Superior Court to end DPS' alleged discriminatory practices by compelling the department to comply with the Personnel Service Rules and Regulations and competitive selection process.

Sgt. Deleon Guerrero is currently the officer in charge of the DPS Communication and Technology Section.

In his petition for judicial review, Sgt. Deleon Guerrero asked the court to direct a DPS-wide desk audit of all civil service employees to evaluate and assess their duties; responsibilities; rank; classification; salary status; and promotion eligibility.

The plaintiff, through lawyer Robert T. Torres, sought a court order for an immediate corrective action to compel DPS to comply with the Civil Service Act and PSSRR rules governing all civil service covered employees as to promotion; salary/merit/ increases; and competitive selection of all officers who are in the same situation or disparately treated.

According to Deleon Guerrero, DPS unlawfully withheld or unreasonably delayed compliance with the PSSRR, the Commonwealth Salary Act of 1988, and the Civil Service Act, particularly in disregarding and non-compliance with promotion and salary/merit increase regulations.

Deleon Guerrero alleged that DPS' action in the hiring of three police sergeants were unlawful and that those agency actions should be set aside.

DPS Police Sgt. Thomas Blas Jr. earlier joined in Guerrero's formal grievance.

CPA

From Page 1

ports agency on moderate status due to improvements in its administration of the airport improvement program.

The action came about after CPA repaid FAA some $1.25 million in questionable administrative expenses that were identified by the Office of Inspector General for fiscal years 2005 through 2007.

FAA has also reinstated the letter of credit that authorizes CPA to draw funds from the U.S. Treasury whenever it needs to be reimbursed for allowable project costs.

According to CPA executive director Efrain Camacho, the agency is in the process of completing a cost allocation plan so that this issue will be fully resolved and CPA will be removed from risk status.

There are three levels of risk: nominal, moderate, and elevated.

FAA created this rating system after audit findings in FY 2005 identified the potential for misuse of AIP funds within the oversight and monitoring phase of the grant management process.

The moderate risk rating apply to an airport sponsor that has a documented record of deviation from appropriate grant management processes and documentation, including a finding of fraud, waste or abuse; repeated grant drawdown irregularities; and single audit findings requiring payments to the federal government in excess of $100,000.

The moderate risk status is for airports with previous findings of noncompliance with grant assurances, criminal proceedings, lack of conformance to plans and specifications, a first time airport sponsor, and other considerations as deemed appropriate by the project manager.

In elevated risk category, FAA could revoke the sponsor's letter of credit that allows them to draw down funds from the U.S. Treasury. This requires the most extensive level of grant oversight and documentation and any airport under this rating is deemed to have shown blatant or reckless violation of a grant agreement.

CPA said that FAA has provided CNMI airports approximately $13 million in grants from fiscal year 2008 up to the present, covering four major projects: the generator upgrade and the runway rehabilitation for the Saipan airport, the parallel taxiway on Tinian, and the runway shoulder on Rota.

Just recently, CPA hired CIP/federal grant accountant Chris Camacho to control and manage the expenditure and handling of AIP funds.

CPA aims to be in full compliance in July this year when the agency completes the cost-allocation plan for all federal monies received for airport projects.

EXPLOSIVES

From Page 1

Emergency Management Office director Joaquin Omar to push the remote button for the major detonation, which was witnessed by adults and at least three children from Suicide Cliff.

"I enjoyed it," said 9-year-old Naesia Aldan, who watched in awe as big clouds of smoke rose from the Laggun cliff line. She was accompanied by her mother and two siblings aged 3 and 8. Her mother said it was the family's first time to see a detonation.

One of the biggest

Capt. Pete Leon Guerrero, commander of the CNMI Explosive Response Team or XRT, said this is one of the biggest haul of war ordnance to be detonated since 2004.

The last detonation—held on April 24, 2009—also involved a total explosive weight of 1,000 lbs.

Besides the EOD Team, XRT and Ampro, other agencies that helped secure the surrounding the detonation site were the Department of Public Safety's Boating Safety, Traffic Safety, Motor Carrier, and Fire Divisions.

The detonation was delayed for a few minutes because XRT could not locate the passengers of two vehicles parked in the boonie area near the detonation site. The two—a fisherman and a hiker—were soon found and escorted away from the site.

DPS closed the Marpi area from 12 noon to 3pm. The only area that was not closed off was Suicide Cliff, which was the main viewing point for the detonation. Public access to Suicide Cliff was allowed only through the road leading up to the Far East Broadcasting antenna for viewing purposes.

Major battleground

John Scott, president of Ampro, said about 95 percent of all ordnance detonated yesterday were recovered from a Marpi area that is being cleared of explosives by Ampro under contract with the Department of Public Lands.

Most of them were projectiles, while the rest were hand grenades and mortar rounds.

The Marpi project area consists of 60 hectares of land used by the U.S. military immediately after the capture of Saipan during World War II. It was used to store thousands of tons of ordnance for the impending invasion of the Japanese mainland.

In the 1950s, the U.S. Army attempted to dispose of the munitions by blowing them up in place, but it was only partly successful, leaving the area with unexploded ordnance, according to the biological assessment of the area.

A decade later, a cleanup operation was undertaken and 4,000 tons of hazardous materials were collected and disposed of. Conservative estimates say less than half the ordnance present was removed.

Saipan was a major battleground between American and Japanese forces during World War II.

'Environmental conference field trip'

DPL received Brownfields grant of $550,000 from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to rid the Marpi area of unexploded World War II ordnance.

Scott, in an interview after yesterday's detonation, said they expect to have at least three more detonations until September.

The next one will be held on June 25.

Scott said participants at the 26th Pacific Islands Environment Conference, which will be held from June 22 to 25, will be watching the detonation from Suicide Cliff.

"This will be part of their field trip," he said.

The conference, hosted by the U.S. EPA Pacific Islands Office, will be attended by environmental officials and representatives from the U.S., the CNMI, Guam, American Samoa, Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and other countries in the Pacific.

Sablan wants to show the CNMI's better side

By DANIEL LIBIT
POLITICO.COM

WASHINGTON D.C.—Gregorio "Kilili" Sablan has come to Washington to make amends.

Sablan is the first-ever delegate for the Northern Mariana Islands. But before he can do much of anything for his constituents, he has to convince his colleagues at the Capitol that the Northern Marianas are more than just a haven for sweatshop labor and Jack Abramoff's handicraft.

"The one thing I do here is I tell everybody the truth," Sablan said in a recent interview with POLITICO. "Mr. Abramoff—I never met the gentleman. Over 99 percent of our people never met Mr. Abramoff. I think we got taken for a ride."

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands hired Abramoff in 1995 to help it fend off congressional efforts to impose U.S. labor laws on its textile and clothing manufacturers. Abramoff made millions off the engagement, and, along the way, he sent dozens of members on junkets to the archipelago in the South Pacific.

When Abramoff went down—he's currently serving a four-year sentence in federal prison—the Northern Marianas' reputation in Washington went down, too. Or would have, if it weren't at rock bottom already, what with the steady stream of harrowing stories pouring out of the capital, Saipan. The underage children being forced into sexual servitude. The forced abortions. The workers boated in from Asia, who wore their fingers down to nubs sewing buttons in garment factories for less than minimum wage.

"A perfect petri dish of capitalism" is how former House Majority Leader Tom DeLay would summarize this to The Washington Post.

Sablan

But others took a dimmer view of what had become of the Marianas since the commonwealth signed a covenant with the United States in 1976. And no one was more vocal in criticizing the commonwealth than Rep. George Miller, the veteran California Democrat and close ally of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

So when Sablan arrived in Washington, he says his first order of business was to see Miller.

"Mr. Miller has been harshly criticized from the Northern Mariana Islands," Sablan says. "I told him that, if we have done anything to personally insult him, I apologize on behalf of the Northern Mariana Islands."

Sablan says he offered Miller "a new chapter in the relationship ... and I assured him of my sincerity, and I asked him to approach this relationship with a new approach and an open mind. And I feel that he has done that."

Miller calls Sablan's approach "a critical development for the CNMI."

"For years," he says, "lobbyists like Jack Abramoff could claim to 'represent' the commonwealth's interests but were really working against the interests of workers and families there."

Sablan acknowledges that much of the blame for the Abramoff mess lies with the local politicians in the Marianas—some still in positions of power. "He would not have taken us for a ride if the handful of people that were in official positions didn't allow him to take us for a ride," he says.

But the job of apologizing has, nevertheless, fallen to him.

"I think he's done a good job at that," says Rep. Mike Honda (D-Calif.). "Nobody wants to punish or withhold or deny any services or considerations because of Abramoff's presence there."

There is still work to be done. Sablan says he's heard, not infrequently, that the Abramoff taint has members and staffers leery about visiting the Marianas. He has been working hard on organizing a members trip—and although he's cautious with the details, he says he's hopeful it will come together before year's end.

He needs Washington's attention, and quick. Since the garment trade went kaput in 2006, the islands' general economic state has gone from dreadful for many to abominable for most. Nowhere in Saipan is the water safe to drink, and the next-largest island, Tinian, is without a single sewer line. Sablan says that the federal government has plans to fix these problems, that it's "just a matter of getting this prioritized."

And there's the rub.

"What was an infrastructure problem will eventually be a health problem," Sablan says.

The Senate bill former President George W. Bush signed into the books last May, which provided for a CNMI nonvoting delegate in the House, also extended U.S. immigration law to the islands. A previous law requires the islands to increase their minimum wage 50 cents each year until it conforms to the federal standard.

Prior to winning the delegate seat, Sablan worked for two Northern Marianas governors. Most recently, he headed the Commonwealth Election Commission, a job he appreciated because, he says, "I was obligated to be fair, even though some of the politicians happen to be my friends, my relatives or people who don't like me."

Now he must navigate the commonwealth's highly nepotistic and quasi-dynastic local political scene, while trying to present a reform-minded face to Congress. It's a delicate endeavor, which may be why as effusive as Sablan has been in his Abramoff atoning, he's careful not to single out anyone in particular back home.

He says he has differences with local politicians, but that it's best he works them out in private. Sablan chuckles when asked if it'd be better for the islands if those politicians were removed from the equation.

"Look, Mr. Abramoff is already in jail," he finally says. "We don't have anybody else to go to bed with."

Read article online at http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0509/22535.html.

FAM TOUR MVA

My WAVE club members from the class of Joan Cepeda and Evelyn Alarcon at Tinian Elementary School take a familiarization tour yesterday, May 29, of the limestone monoliths at House of Taga.

Big prizes guaranteed in Agri Fair on June 6

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Big prizes await winners in the 28th Saipan Agricultural Fair on June 6 at the Sabalu Market, which had been the highlight of past stagings of the annual event.

NMC-CREES agricultural consultant Isidoro Cabrera said over 80 fulltime farmers and ranchers in the CNMI will display their best produce and have the chance to win cash prizes in several contests.

There will be lots of prizes to be given out during the numerous contests such as best fruits served and best animals, including best looking cattle, pigs, chicken, rabbit, duck, turkey and pigeon.

Top winners in many of the categories are guaranteed to win up to $200.

A grand prize of $500 will be given to the Plant and Animal Division.

Top prizes for the different categories are $200 for the best bull, $150 for the best cow, $150 for the best boar, $100 for the best sow/gilt, $100 for the best male goat, $75 for the best female goat, and $25 each for the best rabbit, duck, turkey, pigeon, chicken (broiler, layers, sports).

Second and third place finishers in each category will also win prizes.

There will also be corresponding prizes in fruit and vegetable display contests.

There are a total of 42 fruits and 39 vegetables that are on the list of possible entries.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial is set to designate May as Mes Lancheros during a simple signing ceremony today at the Sabalu Market.

The public is invited to join the farmers and rancher in the CNMI for this occasion.

The event is being jointly organized by the Department of Lands and Natural Resources and the Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research Extension and Education Services.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Pursuant to 4 CMC, Div. 7, Section 7306 (i) of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Oceania Insurance Corporation is making its intention known of decreasing the company's paid-up capital and surplus in accordance with this statute.

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Opinion

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EDITORIAL

In search of buyers

China lent it, the United States spent it, is a boiled-down description of the economic relationship between the two countries over the past decade. U.S. consumers gobbled up inexpensive Chinese goods (as well as those from other countries), fueling high levels of global growth. The Chinese amassed huge savings, which were in large part used to fund U.S. borrowing. That's not exactly a virtuous cycle, but it's one that became hard to break—and for the most part, no one really wanted to.

However, it is highly unlikely that U.S. consumers will spend us out of this downturn. Research from the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco suggests that U.S. household leverage, which increased from 65 percent in the mid-1980s to 130 percent today, will come down significantly from such stratospheric levels, dampening U.S. consumption growth for quite some time. This deleveraging is in order—such high debt rates are clearly unsustainable—but it could also jeopardize what is likely to be a shaky recovery if there is no clear alternative purchaser of the world's goods. Though the United States and other governments are doing their parts through massive coordinated stimulus policies, that will not serve as a permanent solution. As last week's warning from Standard & Poor's about a possible downgrade of Great Britain's AAA bond rating made clear, countries with deficits will have to turn their attention from borrowing to closing their budget gaps once the recovery takes hold.

With its high saving rates and massive population, China has naturally attracted attention as a potential driver of consumption growth. Chinese families haven't been big spenders in the past (the country's spending has been more focused on government investment), due to cultural norms and low incomes. One of the largest factors is a lack of safety net and insurance programs, which forces families to set aside much of their incomes as precautionary savings. Measures to broaden the Chinese middle class and provide some basic economic security could free up immense amounts of cash that could be used to help get the global economy back on its feet. Indeed, the Chinese government has recently introduced new health-care and pension benefits, which should contribute a good deal to Chinese families' spending.

Pressures to speed up the process or to move it in a certain direction are unlikely to be greeted warmly by China. For years, the International Monetary Fund has been urging it to take measures to increase household incomes and the flexibility of its currency. The Chinese respond that they would like to take a bigger role in governing the IMF, not just take guidance from it. Treasury Secretary Timothy F. Geithner will have to approach the topic delicately during his trip to China next week.

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A split decision based on legal nonsense

By TIM RUTTEN
Special to the Los Angeles Times

Rutten is a Times *columnist. E-mail him at timothy.rutten@latimes.com.*

One of the most misunderstood stories in the Western moral tradition involves the "judgment of Solomon," which usually is taken as a metaphor for splitting the difference.

But that's wrong. The story, for those who have forgotten, involves two harlots who came to King Solomon to resolve a dispute. Both recently had given birth, but one women's baby lived and the other's died. The woman who went to sleep with a living child and awoke to find a dead baby in her arms claimed that the other had switched their infants. Solomon listened to both and then announced that he would "cut the living child in two and give half to one woman and half to the other."

When one of the women renounced her claim "in anguish" and the other accepted the verdict, the king gave the anguished harlot the living child, for she had reacted as only the true mother would. The point, in other words, is that Solomon didn't split the baby. Justice divided is no justice at all.

That's essentially the problem with the California Supreme Court's ruling Tuesday, upholding the ban on same-sex marriage while leaving legally intact the 18,000 or more unions the state already has sanctioned.

Legal precedents notwithstanding—and the six clearly nervous justices who made up the majority in this case reached back to the state Constitution of 1849 for those—Tuesday's decision was intellectually and morally incoherent. It essentially tells Californians that a right as fundamental as the ability to choose the marital partner of your choice is a kind of judicial lottery ticket—if you got in early, you win, but those who arrived a few days late lose. Sorry.

You could feel the justices straining for their convoluted result in every tortured sentence of Tuesday's 6-1 opinion, and it was impossible not to draw comparisons with the moral and legal clarity of the court's ruling last year that the state Constitution guaranteed gays and lesbians the right to wed the partner of their choice.

That ruling, also written by Chief Justice Ronald M. George, drew deeply—in spirit, at least—on philosopher Michael Walzer's insight that the American conception of moral progress consists not in the creation of novel rights but in the extension of those recognized as fundamental to those people to whom they've been denied. As such, the earlier decision stood in a distinguished line that includes Griswold vs. Connecticut and Brown vs. Board of Education—in which courageous judges undertook to synchronize the law with the social conscience of their age.

Tuesday's ruling stands in the line of moral retreat and expedient retrenchment that includes Dred Scott vs. Sandford, Plessy vs. Ferguson and Korematsu vs. the United States.

Consider this passage from George's latest majority opinion, asserting—against all reason—that the November ballot initiative known as Proposition 8 did not entirely repeal or abrogate same-sex couples' right to privacy and due process or the "constitutional right of same-sex couples to `choose one's life partner and enter with that person into a committed, officially recognized and protected family relationship.' " Instead, George wrote, "the measure carves out a narrow and limited exception to these state `constitutional rights.' "

George went on to argue that Proposition 8 did not abrogate "all of the other extremely significant substantive aspects of a same-sex couple's state constitutional right to establish an officially recognized and protected family relationship and the guarantee of equal protection under the laws."

In other words, gay and lesbian Californians can board the marital bus but must take seats at the rear.

Moreover, denying an entire class of people the right to marry the partner of their choice is a "narrow exception" to the equal protection clause? And it's morally permissible to carve out exceptions to constitutional rights for specific groups, as long as it's done by majority vote?

So, if a majority of Californians voted to "carve out a narrow exception" to California's right to privacy and applied it only to Jews, would it be constitutionally acceptable? If American Indians were accorded all the protections of the law by a ballot proposition, except the right to marry a non-Indian, would that be legal?

This is social and moral nonsense.

The court tried Tuesday to cover itself with a fig leaf of decency by allowing the 18,000 existing same-sex marriages to stand. It won't work. This is a logically and morally incoherent decision that will plunge the state into another round of bitterly divisive initiative politics, while adding fuel to the growing sense that all three branches of California's government have lost the ability to function in the public interest.

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Cry me a memorial Yalu River

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Tribune

Vergara is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune*'s Opinion Section.*

Three of my San Vicente Elementary School 6th grade students in late 2006 did not report to class one Monday morning, and when asked "why?" when they finally did, they replied that their parents kept them home because their families believed the North Koreans were going to bomb Guam.

GWB's response to 9/11, as we all know, was the War on Terror, and its consequent and indiscriminate promotion of a climate of fear, with biblical Armageddonian overtones, on all kinds of enemies, perceived and real. North Korea is one of those in our Axis of Evil list.

Stephen B. Wickman, current U.S. Consul General in Shenyang, wrote earlier that when Clinton's efforts aided by Jimmy Carter's diplomacy brought Pyongyang to the negotiating table but failed to meet U.S. expectations, GWB shifted to the "carrot and stick" strategy of coercion. Pyongyang, with its historic policy of Juche (self-reliance), decided to upend the conference table altogether, sending home all international observers of its nuclear program. A six-nation consortium would resume talks with North Korea but Pyongyang would not deviate from its policy of self-reliance in defense, economy, and foreign affairs.

The Hermit Kingdom is back in the news with its nuclear bomb test 6 miles below the ground in the environs close to Kimchaep on the Sea of Japan; plus the two missile tests it reportedly made the day after. Kim Jong-il, the son-of-his-father DPKR founder Kim Il-song, is portrayed once more as the bully who plays with his country like it was a toy, in a world that has dictated rules he does not wish to abide by. Without sounding unpatriotic, we've bullied North Korea enough, why are we surprised that we have created a bully who tries to bully us in return?

I was in Dandong, China by the yi bu kua (literally, one step to North Korea) site near the Hushan Great Wall abut the Yalu river that spills into Korea Bay of the Yellow Sea when the detonation occurred, and I unequivocally declare that Jaime might be James in English, but Bond is not even my middle name, and I hate martinis, not shaken or otherwise, so I had nothing to do with provoking our overgrown juvenile Kim Jong-il in ordering the test.

I actually considered sneaking into Sinuiju, the quiet and low lights North Korean city across the river from Dandong, but my Philippine passport is not current, and they allow Mei Guo (U.S.) passports only during the annual Arirang festival, which is scheduled this year in August through October. My host mentioned that if I had a Chinese picture I.D., (a document that for 100 kuai/RMB = >$15, would equal if not best any U.S. fake driver's license), I would not need to show a passport as long as I stayed less than three days.

Paekdusan crater lake in the border with Jilin Province was also of ecological interest, being a pristine extinct volcano in the Hermit Kingdom's domain. Taking pictures in the crater definitely would be a coup over coffee at the next MINA membership meeting in Saipan, but now, with North Korea deciding to scrap any peace agreements (or cessation of hostilities) with its cousins in the south, the prospects of any Mei Guo attending this year's Arirang festival would be dim. On the other hand, given the yin-yang understanding of reality, full of paradoxes always and at all points, Pyongyang's current drums of war may also be just complementary percussion to the nostalgic singsong for the Arirang of Chosun.

It is ironic that on this Memorial Day weekend, I would be on the others side of the military divide in Liaoning that borders along the Yalu River's Kim Jong-il's hermit kingdom of Chao Xian (North Korea). Here stands a monument for the heroic deeds of Zhong Guo and Hang Kuk soldiers who fought to stem the forward movement of General McArthur's forces poised to invade Manchuria and the rest of China during the Korean War. McArthur failed to discern Mao's efforts across the Yalu river after it repelled Kim Il-song's forces and was militarily humiliated. In that theatre, Mao's son, Mao Anying, would be the Great Helmsman's supreme sacrifice.

History buffs will recall that the Filipino's "I shall return" General and Field Marshall of the Philippine Army, was sacked by "the buck stops here" President Truman for insubordination. Truman refused the popular extension of the Korean conflict across the Yalu Jiang, which McArthur wanted. Dugout Doug, a prima donna of imperial caliber, was known for ignoring his superiors, e.g., he prepared for an invasion of the Philippines when leap-frogging it would have saved time and lives, and might have kept the city of Manila from destruction; he protected the Japanese Imperial House from war crime prosecution when many wanted some accountability measures. Truman had had enough.

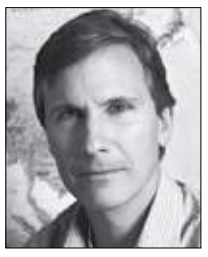
Anyway, the close ties today between North Korea and China is evident in the fact that more than 40 percent of DPRK 's foreign trade is with China, and half of it is conducted through Dandong. Thus, on this tremulous week, the tremors in Kiliju were not felt along the Yalu's Jiangcheng Lu.

Janus-face characterization of anyone never does justice to reality. The multiplicity of our individual and national personalities is best depicted by spectrums rather than strict dichotomies. The same holds true of our neighbors to the North. The Hankooks who spilled their blood in the NMI as part of Japan's economic and military presence were not distinguished by their origins either in the North or the South. Today, we patronize their Saipan retail outlets and their children attend our schools; recently, one of us even allegedly murdered one of their venerable proprietors!

The U.N.'s outcry against Pyongyang's maneuvers has as much tooth and existential bite as our periodic condemnation of Israel over its treatment of the Palestinians. The rituals of geopolitics notwithstanding, we memorialize this weekend with the hope of no longer glamorizing war and romanticizing its proponents/opponents.

Instead, we might harken to Paul Hawken's declaration to the Portland U graduates: "You are brilliant, and the Earth is hiring!" Instead of vilifying those we consider as foes, why not affirm the reality of their uniqueness and individuality, and engage them now in our common task—to rebuild the earth!?!

Why China won't do more with North Korea



By JOHN POMFRET
Special to The Washington Post

Pomfret, Washington Post Outlook *editor and former Beijing bureau chief, writes the "Pomfret's China" blog on washingtonpost.com, from which this article is adapted.*

WASHINGTON—Reading all the stuff about North Korea's nukes, one thing strikes me: the United States seems to want to outsource not just its jobs to China, but also its diplomacy. "It's up to China!" and "China can do more!" are the operative phrases emerging from D.C.-think-tanks and the U.S. government. As if ...

Here's where those easy exhortations break down and why I think it's na ve of us to expect that China can "do more," or in the words of John Bolton, former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, "end this thing tomorrow."

First, there's a silly assumption in Washington that our interests (no nukes in North Korea) are the same as China's. But they're not. China's first interest in North Korea is making sure that Kim Jong Il's regime doesn't collapse. China's second interest? Making sure the Kim regime doesn't collapse. From Beijing's perspective, nukes in North Korea rank somewhere around 10th.

Why is China so intent on "regime maintenance"? If North Korea collapses a few things happen.

First, about 2 million people will rush into China's northeast as refugees. Not fun—and a huge tax on China's already poor infrastructure. (An estimated 250,000 North Korean refugees already move back and forth between the two countries.)

Second, China will be faced with a tough decision: dispatch the People's Liberation Army into North Korea? What happens if the PLA meets up with the South Korean or U.S. armies heading north?

Third, remember all that South Korean investment in China? We're talking billions. It would all go home, into building a united country. (China is South Korea's biggest trading partner, by the way.)

Fourth, a North Korean collapse means that China can forget about turning North Korea into an economic vassal state. (Talk to any South Korean interested in investing in North Korea. Any mine or industrial facility with any prospects of a profit is already a target of Chinese investment.) If Kim collapses, China's firms are going to lose out to the Korean brothers from the south.

Fifth, how would a united Korean peninsula change China's geopolitical position? It definitely wouldn't help it. Right now, Beijing has an (admittedly wacky) Commie buffer state on their border. But at least it's Commie. With a democratic, capitalist, united Korean peninsula, China loses out. (One of the under-reported stories in China is the depth of South Korea's cultural influence in China. In the West, we like to think that China's youth are "Westernized" or even "Americanized." The reality is that they're "South Koreanized." That formulation is definitely unwieldy, but it's closer to the truth.)

Six, China's ethnic Korean population along North Korea's border is not known for being restive. But what happens to those folks once the Korean peninsula is united? Greater Korea, anyone?

Another broader factor also plays into the problems on the Korean peninsula: For decades the United States has assumed that it could mold China into an ally. We had limited success in yanking China into our battle with the Soviet Union. But an exception doesn't prove the rule. There's a lot of hyperventilating in Washington these days about the "G2" and about how the United States and China together will solve the world's problems.

On the Korean peninsula—the very peninsula where China and the United States fought a nasty war 59 years ago—those assumptions have run aground. We can't outsource the solution to North Korea's nukes to China because China views its interests a lot differently than we do. Sure, China would rather not see Pyongyang have the bomb. But if given the choice between a nuclear-armed North Korea and no North Korea at all, Beijing will go with the former.

So, this is the maw that China is staring into as Washington demands more action from Beijing. So what will Beijing do? My guess is encourage more talks.

Geezers take note: More work, less fun ahead

By JIM SHEA
(c) 2009, The Hartford Courant

Shea is a columnist for The Courant.

There used to be a rigid structure to the workday.

You started at a certain time and ended at a certain time, and once the sweatshop whistle blew, your time was your own.

Sure, sometimes you thought about the job when you weren't there, but those moments were fleeting, and any dwelling was quickly dispatched with the same admonishment:

"They ain't paying me enough." The standard workday, of course, is rapidly going the way of job security and the gold watch: 9 to 5 is out; 24/7 is in, with the line between when work ends and when having a life begins being blurred beyond recognition.

A sociology professor at New York University has coined a word to identify this new melding of work and play. He calls it "weisure time." Weisure time is not a good time.

Weisure time is fitting fun around work, rather than fitting work around fun. It's kind of like eating lunch at your desk. We used to call people who embraced this sort of behavior workaholics. Now we call them crackberries.

Crackberries may not be in the office from dawn to "Leno," but the office is always in them. These are the folks on the beach with the laptops; the drivers drifting in traffic with phones to their ears; the mothers texting at their daughters' soccer games.

They are also the future.

Most people blame technology for the rise of the amorphous work schedule. I would add working from home, an arrangement that taught us you could mix work with running to the store, catching the kid's softball game and doing laundry. Not that I ever did any of these things, particularly laundry.

Baby boomers need to come to grips with the concept of weisure time if they plan to work beyond retirement.

According to a story on the future of work in the current issue of Time, by 2019, when our offspring, Generation Y, is in charge (God help us), baby boomers will be among the 40 percent of the work force that rents itself out as consultants and independent contractors.

This is seen as a good thing because boomers will need the income, and companies will need the expertise.

They can call the new arrangement "weisure-geezer" time.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. South winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. South winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼79°	▲87° ▼79°	▲87° ▼79°	▲87° ▼79°	▲87° ▼79°

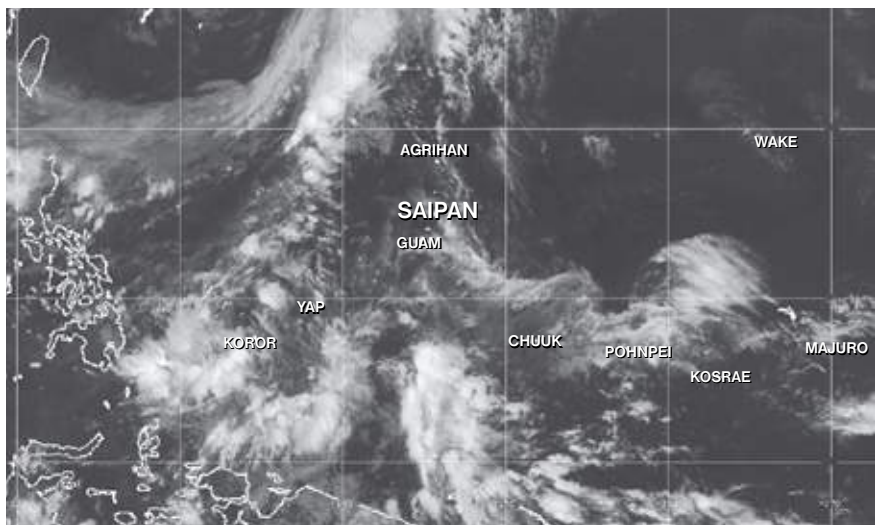
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲86	▼77
Palau	Mostly Cloudy	▲86	▼77
Yap	Cloudy	▲86	▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲88	▼76
Pohnpei	Showers	▲85	▼77
Kosrae	Showers	▲88	▼79
Majuro	Rain	▲85	▼78

Around The Globe

Auckland	Rain	▲61	▼47
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲88	▼63
Hong Kong	Showers	▲82	▼75
Honolulu	Partly Sunny	▲83	▼73
London	Mostly Sunny	▲70	▼50
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲78	▼60
Manila	Rain	▲84	▼78
Melbourne	Mostly Cloudy	▲60	▼47
Miami	Thundershowers	▲87	▼72
New York	Partly Sunny	▲77	▼60
Osaka	Rain	▲74	▼60
Paris	Sunny	▲70	▼51
Pusan	Cloudy	▲75	▼57
Rome	Showers	▲71	▼57
Salem	Sunny	▲80	▼48
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲69	▼54
Seoul	Cloudy	▲75	▼52
Tokyo	Rain	▲74	▼65
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲80	▼62

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, FRIDAY, MAY 29, 2009
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front cuts through the northwest corner of the discussion area from 25N140E to beyond 130E at 17N. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are located along and up to 50 miles either side of the cold front from 18N137E to 24N144E. A surface trough extends southward from 18N135E to a weak circulation centered at 12N133E and continues southward to end at EQ135E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are found over Koror west of the trough axis in an area enclosed by a line from 8N130E to 14N136E to 2N136E to 2N130E back to 8N130E. Another surface trough located west of Chuuk stretches southward from 5N144E to 2N142E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are found west of the trough axis within 60 miles of a line from 9N141E to 5N143E to 1N141E. Trade-wind convergence is generating a large area of scattered showers south of Pohnpei and Chuuk between 6N and EQ from 147E to 161E. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers southeast of Majuro within 90 miles of a line from 2N173E to 4N180.

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
1:05 AM Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet
6:52 AM Today	Low Tide:	1.1 Feet
11:17 AM Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
6:39 PM Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	5:46 AM	6:43 PM
Sunday	5:46 AM	6:44 PM
Monday	5:46 AM	6:44 PM
Tuesday	5:46 AM	6:44 PM
Wednesday	5:46 AM	6:45 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	11:20 AM	
Sunday	12:15 PM	12:06 AM
Monday	1:09 PM	12:46 AM
Tuesday	2:00 PM	1:24 AM
Wednesday	2:52 PM	2:03 AM

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- CAMPUS BULLETIN
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- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

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- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 9, 2009

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm	1,7

SAIPAN-GUAM

CO9317	4:30am	5:20am	Daily
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm	1, 7
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	4, 5
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

CO9598	2:20am	2:50am	5, 6
CO9312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-PALAU (ROR)

CO893	5:50pm	6:50pm	3, 5
CO953	6:50pm	7:50pm	1, 7
CO953	7:35pm	10:05pm	2, 4, 6

PALAU (ROR)-MANILA

CO893	7:35pm	9:10pm	3, 5

GUAM-MANILA

CO893	5:50pm	9:10pm	3, 5 via ROR
CO933	7:00pm	8:40pm	Daily
PR111	6:00am	7:45am	1, 2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

NW99	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
NW78	9:00am	2:05pm	Daily via NGO
NW75	3:50pm	6:25am	Daily

GUAM-NARITA (NRT)

CO961	6:35am	9:10am	Daily
NW83	8:00am	1:55pm	Daily via KIX
CO6	12:00pm	2:45pm	Daily
NW73	4:05pm	7:00pm	Daily
CO963	4:35pm	7:15pm	Daily

SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)

OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	1
OZ119	4:20am	7:00am	4,6

GUAM-OSAKA (KIX)

NW83	8:00am	10:45am	Daily

SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO)

NW78	9:00am	11:40am	Daily

GUAM-NAGOYA (NGO)

CO971	7:45am	10:30am	Daily
NW23	4:10pm	7:05pm	Daily
CO975	4:35pm	7:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 5

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ604	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ604	2:50am	6:30am	excl 1
OZ119	4:00am	11:20am	1 via KIX
OZ119	4:20am	11:20am	4, 6 via KIX

SEOUL (ICN)-HONG KONG

OZ721	9:05am	11:45am	Daily
OZ723	7:45pm	10:30pm	Daily

SEOUL (ICN)-MANILA

OZ701	8:35am	11:25am	Daily
OZ703	7:50pm	10:50pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

CO9598	3:25am	4:00am	5, 6
CO9312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

CO9316	2:20am	3:10am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
CO9598	2:20am	4:00am	5, 6 via ROP
CO9596	7:00am	5:00am	Daily
CO9600	10:20am	11:10am	Daily x6
CO9312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	1, 4, 5, 7
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

CO9597	12:50pm	1:20pm	1, 7

PALAU (ROR)-GUAM

CO954	1:10am	5:30am	3, 5, 7
CO954	1:45am	4:40am	1, 2
CO892	2:35am	5:30am	4, 6

MANILA-PALAU (ROR)

CO892	10:10pm	1:50am+1	3, 5

MANILA-GUAM

CO892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	3, 5 via ROR
CO934	10:55pm	4:30am+1	Daily
PR110	10:00pm	4:00am	1, 3, 5, 6, 7

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

NW76	10:00am	2:35pm	Daily
NW77	6:30pm	1:40am+1	Daily via NGO
NW100	7:50pm	12:30am+1	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-GUAM

NW74	10:00am	2:50pm	Daily
CO962	10:30am	3:00pm	Daily
CO7	3:50pm	8:25pm	Daily
NW84	6:20pm	1:40am+1	Daily
CO964	8:25pm	1:00am+1	Daily
NW82	8:30pm	1:05am+1	4
NW82	8:30pm	1:20am+1	X 4

OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN

OZ120	9:55pm	2:20am+1	3, 5, 6

OSAKA (KIX)-GUAM

NW84	9:05pm	1:40am+1	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN

NW77	9:10pm	1:40am	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-GUAM

NW24	10:00am	2:35pm	Daily
CO970	11:30am	4:30pm	Daily
CO972	8:25pm	12:55am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	4, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	3, 5, 6 via KIX
OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ603	8:10pm	1:40am+1	excl 7

HONG KONG-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ724	12:30am	5:05am	Daily
OZ722	1:15pm	5:45pm	Daily

MANILA-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ702	12:45pm	5:45pm	Daily
OZ704	11:50pm	4:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish
Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish
Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad
Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am
Youth Sunday School: 9am
English Worship Service Sunday: 10am
Sunday Service: 5:30pm
Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm
Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm
Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;
Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm
Mid-week Service: 7:30pm
Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm
Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm
Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,
Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Worship Service: 9am
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am
Sunday: 7am
Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm
Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English)
Saturday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville
Sunday Services
9:00 AM
Place of the church-next to Mt. Carmel Cathedral on Chalan Kanoa Dr. • Tel: 322-6158
Pastor JJ Matsumoto

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group
8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
English Service: 9-11am, Sunday
Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 8:20am
Sunday Adult: 10am
Sunday Adult: 11:30am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am–12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided)
Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620

Saipan Bible Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30-10am
Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 6pm
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church
(Formerly Saipan Baptist Church)
Afetna St., San Antonio

Sunday	9am	Sunday school
	10am	Regular worship
	6pm	worship
Wednesday	7pm	worship

Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.

Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi
Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries

Sunday	5:30am-6:30am	
Morning prayer		
	7am-9am	English service
	7am-9am	Sunday school
	10am-12noon	English service, Koblerville
Wednesday	7pm-9pm	Prayer meeting
Saturday	7pm-9pm	Tagalog service

Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

May 30, 2000

AGO tells CUC to stop award of 80-MW project
The Attorney General's Office had strongly suggested to the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation board to withhold awarding of the Saipan power project to Enron until technical specifications and contractual issues on the new proposed plant had been met. Because majority of the board members went ahead and ignored the AGO's recommendation, the government-owned utility corporation is now again in hot water as the House of Representatives steps in on the heels of its decision to hand out the estimated $120 million contract last Friday. The House is scheduled to meet this afternoon in a special session in which the issue of the controversial 80-megawatt power generation is one of its top agenda.

Amend sweeping ban on toy guns
Chief Public Defender Masood Karimipour has recommended that a proposed measure which seeks a sweeping a ban on the sale of toy guns in the market be limited only to those items that can be legitimately mistaken for a real gun. While he shares the belief that selling of toy guns should be regulated to ensure the safety of residents and police officers, Karimipour said the current definition is quite broad, making it a crime to possess all toys which resemble a real gun. "The bill's reference to the toy's size shape, or overall appearance resembling a real handgun or rifle is so broad that it bans many toys which are clearly children's toys and water guns," said Mr. Karimipour in a letter to Rep. Dino Jones, chair of the Judiciary and Government Operations Committee.

May 30, 2001

Few students entering college
Financial problems force graduating high school students to delay their college plans, even if they are now more aware of the value of education in landing a good job. Marianas High School administrators have assessed this development among MHS students over the years, noting that if only economics permitted, most seniors would choose to pursue higher education to survive the highly-competitive job market. In less than three weeks, around 300 MHS seniors are expected to exit high school. But only 38 to 40 percent of them will actually proceed with plans to walk in the college treadmill.

CNMI sees need to nourish growth of small businesses
The Commonwealth Development Authority and the Northern Marianas College have agreed to synthesize efforts to facilitate the growth of economic activities in the CNMI through the increased participation of small businesses. Under the current setup, which is more of an informal partnership between the two agencies, NMC's Small Business Development Center provides the necessary counseling and consultation for hopeful local entrepreneurs while CDA provides the needed capital to start up a business. Officials of the two agencies strengthened their partnership during a meeting yesterday with Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio who declared June as the CNMI Small Business Development Month.

May 30, 2002

Receivership proceedings shelved
The Supreme Court removed Randall T. Fennell as temporary receiver of the Bank of Saipan effective yesterday, in a decision that also ruled out any more ex parte proceedings between the Superior Court and any parties involved in the BoS case. The high court issued its ruling yesterday morning, around the same time when a receivership hearing was ongoing before the lower court. But the Superior Court deferred the receivership proceedings to a later date, following a last-minute motion filed by the bank, through its counsel Calvo and Clark, to disqualify Judge Edward Manibusan from presiding over the controversial civil action.

BoS: No to Oscar Camacho
The Bank of Saipan has asked the court to appoint a non-partisan expert to handle the bank's receivership, as it aired yesterday opposition to former CNMI Director of Banking Oscar Camacho, who is being groomed as Randall T. Fennell's replacement. In a motion filed before the Superior Court, BoS counsel Calvo and Clark, expressed doubt against Camacho's ability to be impartial as the independent receiver, stating that "he works for the executive branch, which over the past few weeks has worked closely with the conflicted temporary receiver to deceive the bank's directors and shareholders."

Business

Oil prices jump above $65; first time for '09

NEW YORK (AP)—Oil prices closed above $65 per barrel Thursday for the first time in six months as OPEC maintained crude production levels as expected and a pair of reports suggested a slightly brighter economic picture.

Benchmark crude for July delivery added $1.63 to settle at $65.08 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

In London, Brent prices gained $1.89 to settle at $64.39 a barrel on the ICE Futures exchange.

Retail gas prices have shadowed oil prices, ticking higher every day this month. Gas prices are not only rising because of crude. Refiners, stung by falling demand for gasoline, have cut back sharply on production this year.

The national average pump price increased 1.5 cents overnight to $2.449 a gallon, according to auto club AAA, Wright Express and Oil Price Information Service. Gas is 40.1 cents a gallon more expensive than last month, but it's still $1.495 a gallon cheaper than a year ago.

U.S. energy consumption still hovers at its lowest level in a decade, however, because of the recession.

The Energy Information Administration said Thursday that U.S. storage facilities added another 106 billion cubic feet of natural gas last week, putting the overall surplus well above the five-year average.

That's largely because manufacturers and other big industrial power users have been slashing production and cutting jobs.

The lack of spending on energy over the past several months has meant growing supplies and lower prices, at least compared with last year.

On Thursday, however, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries stood firm on production levels. Oil prices have nearly doubled since the beginning of the year as the group uncharacteristically complied with production quotes for the most part.

Signs show recession is easing but. . .

WASHINGTON (AP)—The economy is sending a message of hope laced with caution: That the recession is steadily easing, but new threats could delay any recovery.

One piece of heartening news was that the number of people seeking first-time jobless aid fell last week, a sign companies are cutting fewer workers.

And even though sales of newly built homes were flat last month, the figures suggested that the battered U.S. real estate market is nearing a gradual comeback.

But pessimists could point to bleaker news Thursday: The number of people continuing to receive unemployment benefits rose to 6.78 million—the largest total on records dating to 1967 and the 17th straight record-high week.

The figure signaled that the jobless rate, which reached 8.9 percent in April, will rise in May, economists said. And many economists expect the rate to approach 10 percent by year's end.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Time Warner to spin off AOL, ending ill-fated deal
NEW YORK (AP)—Time Warner filed for the corporate world's version of a divorce Thursday, saying will spin out AOL as a separate company and get on with its life as a movie, TV and publishing conglomerate. Now AOL will try to bounce back with the help of its online advertising business, a challenge that falls to former Google Inc. advertising executive Tim Armstrong, 38, who was hired as AOL CEO in March. Time Warner owns 95 percent of AOL and will buy out Google's 5 percent stake during the third quarter for an undisclosed amount.

Japan factory output jumps but jobless rate rises
TOKYO (AP)—Japan's industrial production jumped at the fastest pace in 56 years, signaling a recovery among manufacturers, but rising joblessness and falling prices clouded prospects for the world's second-biggest economy. Factory output surged a stronger-than-expected 5.2 percent in April from the previous month, rising for the second straight time and marking the biggest increase since March 1953. Manufacturers predicted further gains in May and June.

Chrysler heads back to bankruptcy court Friday
NEW YORK (AP)—It will take one more day for a judge to determine whether it's in the best interests of Chrysler and its stakeholders to sell most of the company to Italy's Fiat Group SpA. Robert Nardelli, Chrysler LLC's departing chairman and chief executive, testified in court Thursday that he expects the required U.S. regulatory approvals for the sale of the bulk of Chrysler's assets to a Fiat-led group to be in place by Friday, with international approvals to come later. But after a nearly 13-hour marathon session, the hearing was adjourned shortly before midnight, and it remains unclear when testimony and arguments related to the sale will wrap up and allow U.S. Judge Arthur Gonzalez to rule. The hearing will resume at 9 a.m. EDT Friday.

Nation

Multiracial people become fastest-growing US group

WASHINGTON (AP)—Multiracial Americans have become the fastest growing demographic group, wielding an impact on minority growth that challenges traditional notions of race.

The number of multiracial people rose 3.4 percent last year to about 5.2 million, according to the latest census estimates. First given the option in 2000, Americans who check more than one box for race on census surveys have jumped by 33 percent and now make up 5 percent of the minority population—with millions more believed to be uncounted.

Demographers attributed the recent population growth to more social acceptance and slowing immigration. They cited in particular the high public profiles of Tiger Woods and President Barack Obama, a self-described "mutt," who are having an effect on those who might self-identify as multiracial.

HAWK RELOCATION
A young red-tailed hawk is held shortly after being removed from a nest 60-feet up in a cottonwood tree adjacent to Seattle-Tacoma International Airport Wednesday, May 27, 2009, in SeaTac, Wash. The young hawk, estimated to be 28 days old, was one of two removed from two nests near the airport Wednesday as part of a raptor strike avoidance program that relocates young hawks to safer areas in northern Washington. Six pairs of territorial adult hawks, considered "airport savvy" and helpful in keeping away transient hawks, are allowed to remain near the airport.

AP

Population figures as of July 2008 show that California, Texas, New York and Florida had the most multiracial people, due partly to higher numbers of second- and later-generation immigrants who are more likely to "marry out." Measured by percentages, Hawaii ranked first with nearly 1 in 5 residents who were multiracial, followed by Alaska and Oklahoma, both at roughly 4 percent.

Utah had the highest growth rate of multiracial people in 2008 compared to the previous year, a reflection of increasing social openness in a mostly white state.

Investigators try to unravel abduction hoax case

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Bonnie Sweeten appeared to neighbors, colleagues and other school parents like a woman smoothly juggling the responsibilities of work and family.

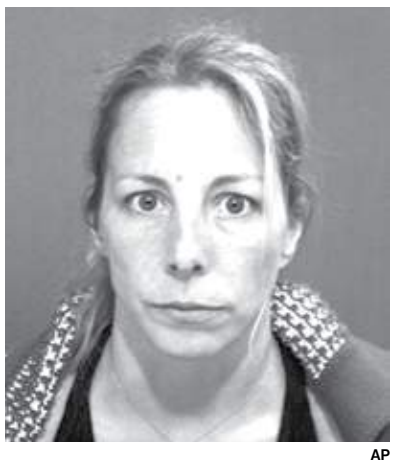
But the 38-year-old might have cracked this week when, police say, she drained several bank accounts, took a co-worker's driver's license, faked a 911 call about being stuffed in a car trunk and boarded a flight with her 9-year-old daughter to Disney World.

The call touched off a frantic search for the pair that ended 30 hours later when police handcuffed Sweeten as she and the child returned to their hotel at the amusement park on Wednesday night.

She has been charged with filing a false report and identity theft. Records listed no lawyer for her yet.

The missing girl, Julia Rakoczy, was reunited with her father at an Orlando police station on Thursday afternoon, authorities said.

"The daughter was very concerned for her mother," said Jim Solomons, a spokesman for the Orange County Sheriff's Office. "To see any one of your parents arrested and taken to jail and then you're put in protective custody ... that's a terrible situation for anyone, much less a kid."



AP
This image provided by the Orange County Florida Sheriffs department shows the booking photo of Bonnie Sweeten.

Sotomayor's views on abortion rights are unknown

WASHINGTON (AP)—One of the few things conservatives and liberals agree on when it comes to Sonia Sotomayor is that her views on abortion rights are a mystery—and one that must be solved before she can be confirmed as a Supreme Court justice.

Sotomayor

Sotomayor's nomination has reopened a politically and emotionally charged debate over abortion that's energized interest groups on the left and right—all working to draw members, money and attention by ensuring the issue features prominently in the judge's confirmation hearings.

Unlike many liberal organizations that came out swiftly and enthusiastically to back Sotomayor, abortion-rights groups are withholding their support until she answers questions on the court's 1973 legalization decision and the principles behind it.

NARAL Pro Choice America has praised her experience and background but has stopped well short of endorsing her. "We look forward to learning more about Judge Sotomayor's views on the right to privacy and the landmark Roe v. Wade decision as the Senate's hearing process moves forward," the group's president, Nancy Keenan, said Tuesday, the day the nomination was announced. She declined through a spokesman Thursday to comment further on the subject. The group is asking supporters to urge senators to ask Sotomayor about Roe and the right to privacy.

Neither abortion rights advocates nor foes take any comfort from the abortion-related cases on which Sotomayor has ruled as a federal judge—none of which were decided based on the principles or precedents underlying Roe v. Wade.

Bush says he misses seeing servicemembers, WH food

BENTON TOWNSHIP, Mich. (AP)—Flying on Air Force One, eating meals prepared by the White House kitchen staff and drawing inspiration from his encounters with U.S. military personnel were among things former President George W. Bush missed since leaving office, he said Thursday.

The often-tearful meetings he had with relatives of fallen soldiers were "in some ways... very hard and in some ways, it was very uplifting," the Texas Republican said in a speech to The Economic Club of Southwestern Michigan at Lake Michigan College.

About eight people protested Bush's appearance outside the venue, carrying signs that called him a murderer and a traitor. The speech Thursday was one of the first made by the former president since leaving office in January.

Bush, the nation's 43rd president, spoke to 2,500 people about "the fog of war" that followed the terror attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the economic downturn and his return to life as a regular citizen.

"It was a roller coaster of emotions, it really was," Bush said of the terror attacks. "I think about it now at times but I definitely thought about it every day as president."

ACROSS THE NATION

Obama: Health care changes must come this year

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama warned Thursday that if Congress doesn't deliver health care legislation by the end of the year, the opportunity will be lost, a plea to political supporters to pressure lawmakers to act. "If we don't get it done this year, we're not going to get it done," Obama told supporters by phone as he flew home on Air Force One from a West Coast fundraising trip. Obama's political organization, Organizing for America, invited campaign volunteers to a midday conference call to describe a nationwide June 6 kickoff for its health care campaign. The presidential plea came as lawmakers prepare for an aggressive schedule of work aimed at producing comprehensive health care overhaul bills in the House and Senate by August.

Minn. boy who resisted chemo undergoes treatment

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—A 13-year-old boy cancer patient who fled the state with his mother rather than face chemotherapy underwent a round of the treatment he feared Thursday, a family spokesman said. Jim Navarro said Daniel Hauser attended his second chemotherapy session at Children's Hospitals and Clinics but he had no immediate update on the teen's condition. The hospital wouldn't release information about the procedure, citing patient confidentiality. The boy's parents, who initially resisted chemotherapy out of a preference for alternative treatments, faced legal consequences if they skipped the appointment. Daniel also attended an appointment a day earlier. The family had said an earlier round of chemotherapy made Daniel, who suffers from Hodgkin's lymphoma, feel sick and hardened their resolve against further treatment.

Openly gay teen voted prom queen at LA high school

LOS ANGELES (AP)—An openly gay teen has been voted prom queen at his Los Angeles high school in a campaign that began as a stunt but ended up spurring discussion on the campus about gender roles and popularity. Sergio Garcia said he felt "invincible" when he was crowned queen of the Fairfax High School dance at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel on Saturday. Days before the dance, Garcia told fellow students that he was "not your typical prom queen candidate. There's more to me than meets the eye." He also promised that he would be wearing a suit on prom night, but "don't be fooled: Deep down, I am a queen." And he made good of that promise Saturday, wearing a gray tuxedo topped off with the prized tiara. Garcia, 18, said he saw fliers advertising the prom and the election but they didn't specify that the queen must be female. He thought the role would suit him better than prom king. "I don't wish to be a girl," he told the Los Angeles Times. "I just wish to be myself."

Trump casino says gunman had planned suicide

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP)—A disgruntled casino visitor, having just shot and mortally wounded a worker at the Trump Taj Mahal Casino Resort, planned to kill himself in a parking garage but was stopped by police, a casino executive said. Mark Juliano, CEO of Trump Entertainment Resorts, which runs the casino, said Thursday the shooter had no previous beef with supervisor Raymond Kot, who had been with the Taj Mahal since it opened in 1990. A Philadelphia television station, however, said the man accused of the shooting sent it a letter dated two days before Wednesday's killing in which he accused casinos of cheating for 20 years. WPVI-TV reported the letter it received from Norristown, Pa., resident Mark Magee didn't contain any threats.

Asia

An emotional funeral for SKorea's Roh Moo-hyun

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—A sea of wailing mourners filled the streets of Seoul for the funeral Friday of ex-President Roh Moo-hyun, whose suicide six days earlier amid a deepening corruption probe plunged South Korea into grief and anger.

Heads bowed, thousands joined a solemn ceremony in the courtyard of the 14th-century Gyeongbok Palace before the hearse carrying Roh's body headed to a grassy plaza outside City Hall for an emotional public ceremony attended by hundreds of thousands more.

Some 21,000 riot police ringed the area to quell any protests by Roh supporters who accuse conservative political opponents led by President Lee Myung-bak, who suceeded Roh last year, of driving the liberal ex-leader to his death.

The criticism comes as Lee faces an increasingly belligerent North Korea, which just two days after Roh's death carried out a nuclear test in a move widely condemned as a violation of international law.

Roh, 62, died May 23 after throwing himself off a cliff behind his home in the southern village of Bongha. Roh, president from 2003 to 2008, recently had been questioned about claims he and his family accepted $6 million in bribes during his presidency.

He denied the bribery allegations, but the accusations weighed heavily on a man who prided himself on his record as a "clean" politician in a country struggling to shake a tradition of corruption.

AP

South Korea national flag hangs at half-mast near the portrait of former President Roh Moo-hyun in a funeral service at the Gyeongbok Palace near the presidential Blue House in Seoul, South Korea, Friday, May 29, 2009.

Roh's suicide stunned the nation of 49 million, where the outspoken Roh—a self-taught former human rights lawyer who swept into office on a populist tide—was celebrated as a leader for the people and was a favorite among young South Koreans. Though many were critical of his antiestablishment ways, others rallied around his efforts to promote democracy, fight corruption and facilitate rapprochement with North Korea.

Roh "lived a life dedicated entirely to human rights, democracy and fight against authoritarianism," Prime Minister Han Seung-soo said at the palace funeral. "Our people won't forget what you accomplished for the country and the people despite a number of hardships."

Last weekend, Roh supporters refused to let Han and others from the ruling Grand National Party pay their respects in Bongha, with some dousing the politicians with water and pelting them with eggs.

Roh supporters have call probe against him "political revenge," and posters accusing Lee of driving Roh to his death with the investigation plastered the walls of one Seoul subway station.

"I've never been so ashamed of being a citizen of this country, a country that kills its own president," said Won Seung-tae, 52, of Seoul.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Ship sinks off Indonesia's coast, at least 5 dead

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—A ship packed with Afghan migrants sank off Indonesia's western coast early Thursday, killing at least five people and leaving 17 others missing, the navy said. Al Muhfid, a second lieutenant, said fisherman rescued more than a dozen people from the water. The men, including several who were badly hurt, told authorities they wanted to seek political asylum in Indonesia because of the security situation in their homeland, he said. It was not immediately clear where the boat was headed.

Suicide attack, market blasts hit Peshawar

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP)—Militants detonated two bombs in a busy market and attacked two police checkpoints in northern Pakistan on Thursday, killing at least 14 people, wounding scores more and testing the resolve of the government as it takes on the Taliban in the Swat Valley. The attacks in Peshawar and Dera Ismail Khan happened within two hours of each other and a day after an assault on security forces in the eastern city of Lahore killed around 30 people. That strike was claimed by the Pakistani Taliban, who warned of further attacks unless the government called off the Swat offensive. He said other attacks were planned for the major cities of Multan, Rawalpindi, Lahore and the capital, Islamabad, and urged civilians to flee.

Sri Lanka: DNA test confirms rebel leader's death

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—Sri Lanka's military said Thursday it has proved conclusively through DNA testing that Tamil Tiger chief Velupillai Prabhakaran was killed last week, after supporters refused to believe a government video showing the leader's dead body. Military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said lab tests compared the DNA of the man they believed to be Prabhakaran with that of his son, who was also killed in the fighting, and proved that the body was the rebel leader's. The army had determined the son's identity through photographs.

Last witness speaks at trial of Myanmar's Suu Kyi

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—The sole witness allowed for pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi insisted Thursday that she had broken no law, as a Myanmar court heard final testimony before closing arguments in a trial that could send the Nobel Peace Prize laureate to prison for five years. Kyi Win, a legal expert and a member of Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party, argued there was no legal basis to the charge that Suu Kyi had violated the terms of her house arrest when an uninvited American swam secretly to her home. Prosecutors seemed very unhappy at his testimony, Kyi Win told reporters outside the courtroom after the trial's ninth day.

World

7.1 earthquake kills six in Honduras, topples homes

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (AP)—A powerful earthquake toppled dozens of homes in Honduras and Belize early Thursday, killing at least six people and injuring 40 as terrified residents spilled from their homes across much of Central America.

The magnitude-7.1 quake struck at 2:24 a.m. (4:24 a.m. EDT; 0824 GMT) off the Caribbean coast of Honduras, 80 miles (130 kilometers) northeast of the beach town of La Ceiba, according to the U.S. Geological Survey in Golden, Colorado.

"People were running for the door," Alfredo Cedeno said from the reception desk at the Gran Hotel Paris in La Ceiba. "You could really feel it and you could see it—the water came out of the pool."

Reynaldo Funez, 15, was buried in his house in Pineda de la Lima, 120 miles (200 kilometers) north of the capital, Tegucigalpa, and 6-year-old Deily Yazmin Santos was killed when her house collapsed in the beach town of Morazan, national fire commander Col. Carlos Cordero said.

Ana Maria Rivera, spokeswoman for Honduras' Permanent Emergency Commission, said Jose Vicente Maradiaga died of a heart attack during the earthquake in the seaside town of Tela, and a 3-year-old boy was crushed when his roof collapsed in Mapulaca near the Salvadoran border. She didn't have Maradiaga's age or the boy's name.

"It was an earthquake of great proportions," she said.

Two other people were killed in home collapses, according to the commission's chief, Marcos Burgos, who didn't have details. At least 40 people were injured, most along the Caribbean coast.

Explosion in mosque kills 15 in Iran

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—An explosion in a mosque killed 15 people near Iran's volatile border with Pakistan and Afghanistan on Thursday and a local official said it was a terrorist attack.

The blast went off in Zahedan, the capital of a lawless province in southeast Iran that frequently witnesses clashes between police and gangs involved in drug smuggling. It has also seen attacks by an Islamic militant group called Jundallah, which claims to be fighting for rights of Sunni Muslims in mainly Shiite Iran but is suspected of al-Qaida links.

Alaeddin Mazari, a local journalist in Zahedan, told The Associated Press that the explosion occurred in the second biggest Shiite Muslim mosque in the city, some 1,000 miles (1,600 kilometers) southeast of the capital, Tehran.

Ali Mohammad Azad, the governor of Sistan-Baluchistan province where Zahedan is the capital, told the official Islamic Republic News Agency the explosion happened at 7:45 p.m. (16:15 GMT) and said a terrorist was involved, but didn't provide further details. He told state television that he detained some suspects who planned additional attacks ahead of the June 12 presidential election.

In 2007, Jundallah, or God's Brigade, killed 11 members of the country's elite Revolutionary Guards in Zahedan.

The state news agency said 80 people were injured in Thursday's explosion and no group had taken responsibility.

WORLD BRIEFS

Cairo University prepares to host Obama

CAIRO (AP)—Cairo University has postponed student exams set for next Thursday and the Egyptian president's security service took over the campus in anticipation that President Barack Obama will address the Muslim world from its main hall. While the American Embassy in Cairo will not confirm the venue, Egyptian officials say Cairo University will be the site of Obama's June 4 speech aimed at repairing U.S. relations with the Muslim world. University spokesman Sami Abdel-Aziz said it is "90 percent" certain that Obama will deliver his speech from the campus, located off a palm tree-lined square on the Nile's west bank.

Israel on edge as US presses to halt settlements

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israel rejected on Thursday a U.S. demand to freeze all construction in West Bank Jewish settlements to encourage peace talks, deepening a dispute with the Obama administration that has the hard-line Israeli government increasingly on edge. The tensions flared on the same day Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas was in Washington for a meeting with President Barack Obama. Abbas said the Palestinian demand for a settlement construction freeze would top his agenda. Using unusually strong language, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said Wednesday that Obama wants a halt to all settlement construction, including "natural growth."

Several policemen beaten by opposition in Georgia

TBILISI, Georgia (AP)—Protesters demanding Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili's resignation beat several police officers and stabbed one with a knife Thursday, officials said. The incident raised new fears that mostly peaceful protests could slide into widespread violence, further destabilizing the strategically-placed ex-Soviet nation which sits astride a key oil pipeline carrying Caspian crude to Western markets. Shortly after police officers were beaten by protesters, about 20 club-wielding men waged into the crowd of opposition demonstrators outside the parliament building, injuring several protesters. Opposition leader Nino Burdzhanadze said the assailants were plainclothes police agents.

Venezuela's Chavez launches 4-day talkathon

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—There's nothing Hugo Chavez relishes more than addressing the nation for hours on end, and on Thursday the loquacious Venezuelan leader seized the airwaves like never before. Chavez began what he said will be a four-day "Hello President" radio and television show celebrating the 10th anniversary of the program that has been widely emulated by other Latin American leaders. "There's no program like this one," Chavez boasted as he launched the program while standing outdoors at an electrical plant in western Venezuela. Chavez said the show would run through Sunday, with some breaks of unspecified duration. The on-air marathon could threaten what Chavez says is his own personal record of taking for more than eight hours straight one Sunday in 2007.

Maharlika

PINOY LIFE IN THE MARIANAS

Saturday, May 30, 2009

240 new Filipino absentee voters in NMI

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

There are a total of 240 new Filipino overseas absentee voters in the CNMI since the start of registration on Feb.1, according to the latest figure from the Philippine Consulate General.

This number is expected to increase before the registration deadline on Aug. 31.

However there is no record on the exact number of Filipinos in the CNMI qualified to register for overseas absentee voting.

These new registrants may now participate in the Philippine national elections under the Overseas Voting Act of 2003 (Republic Act 9189).

During the first two months when the OAV became law, some 2,000 Filipinos in the CNMI registered for the 2005 national elections but only about 30 percent or less than 3,000 actually voted.

The next national election is on May 10, 2010, when Filipinos vote for a president, vice president, 12 senators and one party-list representative.

Previously registered voters who have not voted in the last two national elections must register anew to be able to participate in next year's political exercise.

For those who have previously registered, they may file or request for transfer of registration records, reinstatement in the national registry of OAV, correction of wrong entries or misspelled names, withdrawal of application for registration or certification of pending approval or reactivation of registration record.

Registrants must personally visit the Consulate at the fifth floor of the Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe and submit themselves to biometrics capture for photo, thumbprint and signature.

Bring a valid Philippine passport or DFA certification and accomplished OAV registration.

Because of the significant number of Filipino workers who recently went back home in the wake of the collapse of the garment industry, Consul General Wilfredo DL. Maximo said he could only make an educated guess on the total number of Filipinos living in the CNMI, based on the passports and travel documents as well as those trying to register the birth of their children.

39 in CNMI sworn in for dual RP citizenship

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

A total of 39 individuals in the CNMI have acquired or reacquired their Filipino citizenship in the past five years under the RP dual citizenship law, according to official records of the Philippine Consulate General on Saipan.

The law (Republic Act 9225 or the Citizenship Retention and Re-acquisition Act), will entitle them to rights and privileges as citizens of the Philippines.

The Philippine Congress passed the act in 2003 but the processing of applications started in April 2004 with the designation by the president of the Bureau of Immigration as the lead agency to implement the law.

The Philippine Consulate in the CNMI has also the authority to administer the oath.

Consul General Wilfredo DL. Maximo said it would take only about a week to process and schedule the swearing in ceremony as long as the applicant will submit all the necessary documents.

The law declares that former natural-born Filipinos who later became naturalized citizens of other countries have not lost their Philippine citizenship.

Under the rules, applicants for dual citizenship are no longer obliged to submit birth certificates from the National Statistics Office to prove that they are former natural-born Filipinos.

They only need to submit their birth certificates from the local civil registrars of one's birthplace and other documents, such as one's old Philippine passport, voter's affidavit, and marriage contract, proving that one is a former natural-born Filipino.

CBS' Katie Couric to feature Filipino artist's Smile Project

By MARCONI CALINDAS
CORRESPONDENT

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif.— Primetime news anchor Katie Couric will feature a Boston-based Filipino artist in one of her CBS Evening News segment.

Bren Bataclan, who has made waves across the U.S. with his creative altruism project called "The Smile Project," told this reporter that CBS Evening News already filmed the segment last month. It is scheduled for airing late this month or early June.

The Smile Project started in 2003 where Bataclan would leave at least 15 of his cartoon-inspired acrylic on canvas paintings on the street, with a note attached that says, "This painting is yours if you promise to smile at random people more often." He would then give the painting away for free to interested passersby or bystanders.

In the segment, a CBS Evening News correspondent Michelle Miller waits behind the camera as people peruse Bataclan's paintings. When somebody picks up a piece, the CBS correspondent jumps out and asks them why they chose the artwork. Bataclan then emerges and thanks them for taking the paintings.

Bataclan said it felt "awesome" when he found out he would be featured in the popular primetime evening news program. "Seeing Filipinos in the mainstream is always a plus. Folks in the U.S. don't know a lot about us...," he said, adding that he is still in utter disbelief. "This is my first national TV exposure!"

MARCONI CALINDAS

Boston-based Filipino artist Bren Bataclan is making made waves across the U.S. with his creative altruism project called "The Smile Project."

He recalled that CBS Evening News lauded him about his work and project. "I guess their favorite part was seeing and hearing people's reactions when they pick up the paintings. I believe that is what they will highlight when the story airs," he said.

"The free paintings typically get picked up between three to 30 minutes," said Bataclan, adding that the recipients of his paintings would e-mail him thereafter for feedback. "Some even send me photos and a few visit me in my studio."

In 2008 Bataclan changed his note to "Everything Will Be Alright," aiming to provide more optimism to Americans who are suffering from the current economic recession.

The Smile Project has been capturing the media's attention since its inception. It has been featured in several publications that include the *Reader's Digest,* both the U.S. and Asian version; *Smithsonian Magazine, San Francisco Chronicle, Filipinas Magazine, The Detroit Press,* and *Chicago Tribune*, among many others across the U.S. He has also graced interviews with other local TV news and magazine programs.

Bataclan, 40, has visited more than 20 U.S. cities and over 20 countries. "[My objective is] to leave paintings in all 50 states and all the 181 plus counties in the world to spread joy and optimism during these challenging times and to uplift our Filipino culture," Bataclan said.

Bataclan brings his paintings with him whenever he travels outside Boston and leave them on park benches, train stations, hospitals, senior centers, etc.

"I plan to paint, do my street art and spread joy for the rest of my life; and, of course, to represent the Philippines in the art world and beyond," he said.

Bataclan has left 15 paintings in Los Angeles, which he worked on in Boston last week. Prior to his visit in the City of Angels, he also left paintings in Las Vegas, Nevada and Alaska. He is back in Boston to produce more paintings for the project.

This UCLA and Ohio State University alumnus has been a full time artist for six years now since the dot-com bust.

Most of the feedback Bataclan has received have so far been very positive. Recent recipients from Alaska e-mailed Bataclan and told him how his paintings have affected their lives. One recipient said she "liked the note attached to the painting. So simple and fresh. It reminds me of what a perfect world it would be."

For more information about The Smile Project, Bataclan invites readers to visit his website at www.

LABOR FRONT

No filing fee for indigent workers

By FERDIE PONCE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Q: An alien worker files a Labor complaint without a lawyer. Can a non-lawyer person assist that worker during the Labor hearing?

A: According to the Alien Labor Rules and Regulations, a party appearing pro se or without a lawyer may be assisted by any persons, regardless of whether that person is an attorney, except that a person who is deportable or who has been the subject of debarment for past misconduct may not serve as an assistant.

Each authorized counsel for assistant must file a written notice of appearance with the Labor Administrative Hearing Office. A standard form for this purpose is provided by Labor. Any party may be represented by counsel, at the party's own expense.

■ ■ ■ ■

Q: If a party to a Labor complaint needs the services of an English translator, who shall pay for such services?

A: A party requiring the services of a translator to and from English shall provide a competent translator at their expense. The rules state that the Labor Administrative Hearing Office may require certification of a translator in order for the translator to participate in a hearing.

A translator who has translated a document shall sign the document on its face as evidence of the translation. Such a signature constitutes a declaration, under the penalty of perjury, that the translator has accurately translated the document and has not included any statements beyond those made in the document. According to the regulations, a hearing officer may disqualify a person from participating in a proceeding as a translator, upon a finding, supported by credible evidence, that the person is not sufficiently competent or truthful as a translator.

■ ■ ■ ■

Q: Are indigent workers required to pay a filing fee in bringing a Labor case?

A: Indigent complainants may file in *forma pauperis* and are not required to pay a filing fee. The regulations provide that the standards of the Superior Court with respect to waiver of fees for indigents shall be followed. A complainant who files in *forma pauperis* and is later found by a hearing officer not to qualify for that status may be ordered to pay the filing fee.

The regulations state that a respondent may, but is not required to, file a written response to the complaint.

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Woman abducted as Filipino troops attack militants

JIM GOMEZ
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Gunmen linked to Muslim militants abducted a Chinese woman in the volatile southern Philippines as troops pressed an offensive to fight a wave of kidnappings, officials said Thursday.

Two men in a car snatched Afen Ma Wu, whose relatives are wealthy traders in North Cotabato province, as she was walking in Kabacan town on Wednesday, police spokeswoman Amelou Hinguillo said.

Troops stormed a militant jungle hide-out on Basilan Island the same day, targeting for a motley group of al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf militants and local gunmen accused of such abductions.

The group is believed to have been involved in the recent beheading of a kidnapped farmer and the abduction of three teachers who were freed Tuesday, said navy Commodore Alex Pama, head of a regional anti-kidnapping force. Ten gunmen were killed in the offensive, and Pama said an army officer also died.

"We have an order to end these kidnappings, beheadings and criminality, and that's what we're doing now," Pama told The Associated Press by phone.

Wu, 24, was thought to be in the hands of a kidnapping-for-ransom gang called Pentagon, which is suspected of links to Muslim separatists, military spokesman Lt. Col. Jonathan Ponce said. The military earlier misidentified the missing woman.

The U.S. considers both the Abu Sayyaf and Pentagon to be terrorist organizations and has offered large rewards for the capture of their leaders.

American troops have been helping train Filipino soldiers, and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates is expected to review counterterrorism cooperation during a visit to Manila this weekend.

The Abu Sayyaf is still holding at least seven hostages, including a Sri Lankan peace activist on Basilan and an Italian Red Cross worker on nearby Jolo Island—two predominantly Muslim areas where the militants operate.

The Abu Sayyaf, which has about 400 fighters, has also been blamed for numerous bombings and beheadings. It raised more than $1.5 million last year through ransoms, the government said.

RP's H1N1 flu toll up to 14, says health dep't

By ANNA VALMERO
INQUIRER.NET

AP

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III left, answers media queries during a press conference with Health Undersecretary Mario Villaverde center and Eric Tayag of the National Epidimiology Center Wednesday, May 27, 2009 in Manila, Philippines.

MANILA, Philippines—The country's total confirmed cases of A(H1N1) infection rose to 14 after health officials confirmed four more cases on Friday.

The four new cases, all Filipinos, include a two-year-old girl and a 20-year-old man who had contact with two Taiwanese nationals, who were infected with A(H1N1) at a wedding reception in Zambales province, Health Secretary Francisco Duque said.

This brought to eight the total number of Filipinos who were infected by the Taiwanese mother and child, who learned that they had the diasease upon return to Taiwan.

The two other new cases include a 19-year-old woman and a seven-year-old girl, who came from the United States, where a community outbreak of the disease was recorded, Duque said.

"As DoH (Department of Health) anticipates cases to rise as is happening in other countries, there is no cause for alarm. The increase can be attributed to the ease of virus transmission and freedom of travelers," he said.

"Right now, most cases are mild and self-limiting with a case fatality of one percent, very low compared to dengue which killed 57 in April," he said.

"The most important thing is we do not have severe case or death, there is no indication of sustained community transmission so we do not recommend to postpone classes on June 1," he said.

To streamline hospital resources, Duque said suspected A(H1N1) cases under observation would be quarantined in their homes, instead of in hospitals.

Later Friday, Duque will chair a National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC) meeting to discuss preparedness plans against the spread of the virus.

Since May 1, the DoH reported 211 cases under observation, of which 14 were confirmed cases. Twenty-five persons wre awaiting test results, 27 were under observation while 172 were cleared.

2 rescued seamen in Nigeria missing—VP

By CYNTHIA BALANA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Two of the 16 rescued Filipino crew members of MV Spirit which was hijacked last May 13 by militants in Niger Delta, are missing, Vice President Noli de Castro said.

De Castro, presidential adviser on Overseas Filipino Workers, said on Thursday the Nigerian State Security were searching for Roi Allan Cuasay and Carlo Dagun, who were unaccounted for as of Thursday, following the rescue of the hostages from militants by the Nigerian Army last May 16.

The hostages were captured when militants attacked two ships in Delta State last week, including the MV Spirit, which was mainly crewed by Filipino sailors.

They launched their attacks after having warned oil companies operating there to withdraw their staff from the area.

"I was informed by Consul General Alex Lamadrid that there is still no word on the condition of the two seafarers. We cannot make any speculation, we can only hope that they are safe and alive," De Castro said.

De Castro said the Philippine embassy in Abuja was coordinating with the Nigerian foreign ministry and federal security officials to get updates on the welfare of Cuasay and Dagun.

He said the embassy was also contacting the employer of the two seamen, Orion Marine, to help in the search.

The 14 rescued Filipino crew members were scheduled to arrive at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Wednesday (May 27) and Thursday (May 28), in two batches, he said.

Over 200 foreigners have been kidnapped since militants stepped up their activities against the oil industry in late 2005 and more than 100 expatriates have been seized this year alone as criminal gangs took up the practice.

Kidnappers have focused mostly on foreign, male workers of international companies presumed to have the resources for ransom payments.

Arroyo: There will be elections in 2010

By LIRA DALANGIN-FERNANDEZ
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA, Philippines—Setting off the election fever, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo declared that elections would push through in May 2010 and that the merged Lakas-Kampi-CMD (Christian Muslims Democrats) party would dominate it.

At the same time, the President gave marching orders to her allies to stand "strong and united" behind the merged party, which she said was the "best guarantee for success in 2010."

After shunning talk of politics in the past months, Arroyo came out strongly on Thursday during the merger of the two administration parties, as she shot back at critics who said that Charter change efforts were meant to extend her stay in office and postpone the 2010 elections.

The President said the merger of the two parties was a "tangible proof" that elections would be held next year.

Arroyo

"Cynics and detractors love to paint grim scenarios on the cancellation of the 2010 elections," she said in a speech, adding, "Let this merger of Lakas and Kampi be tangible proof of the administration's readiness nay determination to help ensure that the election do push through."

"I need you with me, strong and united. That's why here, at least in our house, there is no other way forward but to be one, act as one, win as one," she said.

"The emergence of the Lakas-Kampi-CMD as one party is our finest weapon and perhaps our best guarantee for success in the 2010 elections. I look upon Lakas-Kampi moving as one, fighting as one, as the instrument and beacon for electing the best, most qualified, and the worthiest leaders of our country," she said.

Arroyo, founder of Kampi and chairman of Lakas, acknowledged that "rarely we have been unanimous in our thinking and opinions, but I hope that all of us will be disciplined enough to support the party stand."

Lakas-CMD executive director Rey Roquero said that with that merger, there would now be "a well of presidential candidates" gravitating towards the administration party.

Two of the potential presidential candidates—Vice President Noli de Castro and Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr.—attended the merger.

Arroyo said the fusion of Lakas and Kampi was "appropriate and timely" with a year to go before the May 2010 election.

"It's a presage and necessary ingredient to political harmony not only within the administration coalition but throughout the country. The call for national political harmony . . . must emanate from us who constitute the political majority," she said.

Amid doubts about the merger, Arroyo lauded her party mates for making "a great leap of faith and statesmanship . . . for rising above political vagaries to do what is right not only for the administration's political cause but also for the nation."

The President also pressed anew for the automation of the elections, saying this was the best guarantee that the 2010 exercise would be credible.

Electoral reform through automation is part of the 10-point agenda of her administration, she said. The Commission on Election has yet to select a winning bidder that would supply the equipment to computerize the voting and counting of votes.

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0.4% growth puts RP on edge of recession

By RONNEL DOMINGO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Philippine economic growth slowed to a 10-year low of 0.4 percent in the first quarter due to the global downturn, surprising analysts and prompting a senior government official to warn that the country is on the brink of recession.

Reacting to the lower-than-expected growth, monetary authorities trimmed key interest rates by a quarter percentage point to help jump-start the stalling economy. The central bank's overnight borrowing rate was cut to 4.25 percent, a fresh 17-year-low, and its lending rate to 6.25 percent.

Economic growth from January to March screeched to 0.4 percent from 2.9 percent in the last quarter of 2008, according to figures released by the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB).

It was the weakest expansion of the gross domestic product since the last quarter of 1998 when the GDP—the amount of goods and services produced in the country during a particular period—plunged 2.4 percent amid the financial crisis.

"A big challenge to the economic managers is the fact that the Philippine economy is now teetering into recession," NSCB Secretary General Romulo Virola said at a news conference.

But Virola's boss, Socio-economic Planning Secretary Ralph Recto said he did not expect a recession—defined as two straight quarterly contractions of the GDP.

Big surprise

While he anticipated the economy "to remain afloat in 2009," Recto admitted he was "less confident" the lower end of the government's growth target range—which has already been revised downward—would be achieved.

Recto, who earlier predicted the economy to grow by 1.8 percent in the first quarter, acknowledged Thursday the government may need to readjust its revised growth target of 3.1-4.1 percent for the entire year.

The GDP figures "came as a big surprise to everyone," said analyst Jun Calaycay of Accord Capital Equities Inc., adding that he had expected a first-quarter growth of 1.8-2.0 percent.

'Historic declines'

Recto said construction was the main growth driver for the first three months as developers rushed to meet pent-up demand for housing, boosted by a decline in the price of building materials.

Virola, however, said the overall economic slowdown was caused by "historic declines" in manufacturing and trade.

From a sliver of growth in the fourth quarter of last year, industry swung to a contraction of 6.6 percent in the first quarter of this year, with manufacturing plunging 7.3 percent.

Exports sank 18.2 percent, while imports declined 19.2 percent in the same period.

Growth in the farm sector eased to 2.1 percent in the first quarter from 2.9 percent the previous quarter. Agriculture accounts for less than 20 percent of the economy but employs almost a third of the labor force.

The services sector showed flat growth.

Leading indicators

Virola said leading indicators for the May-June period also appeared worrisome.

The indicators include the consumer price index, electricity consumption, exchange rate, hotel occupancy rate, money supply, number of new business incorporations, stock price index, terms of trade index, total imports, tourist arrivals and wholesale price index.

"The leading economic indicators have dropped four quarters in a row and breached into negative territory at -0.195 percent in the second quarter of 2009," Virola said.

"This confirms the all too real threat of a recession … If this trend continues we may slip into recession," he warned.

For Recto, however, the most pressing challenge is a potential drop in cash transfers from the country's 9 million overseas Filipino workers (OFWs). Their remittances, which account for about 10 percent to the economy, still managed to grow 2.7 percent in the three months of the year.

WRIT OF AMPARO AP

Philippine Navy Lt. Senior Grade Nancy Gadian, center, is surrounded by Catholic nuns and supporters as she answers media queries after emerging from a courtroom Thursday, May 28, 2009 in Manila, Philippines. Gadian asked for protections from the court thru the Writ of Amparo after she exposed the alleged mishandling of the funds for Balikatan or the joint military exercise with the United States which she claimed was misappropriated by a senior military officer.

Ninth ray to RP flag's sun proposed

MANILA, Philippines—Senator Richard J. Gordon wants to add a ninth ray to the sun in the Philippine flag to symbolize the Muslims who fought against foreign invaders.

"Our national flag not only represents principles of sovereignty and solidarity of the Philippine nation, but also embodies the ideals and traditions of the Filipino people developed over the course of national history," he said in a statement.

Gordon said the Philippine flag symbolizes the nation's struggle for independence and victory against foreign colonizers.

The three stars in the flag represent the three major geographical divisions of the country: Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao; while the eight rays of the sun represent the eight provinces that revolted against the Spanish regime: Batangas, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, Manila, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, and Tarlac.

Gordon said that behind the stories of the most celebrated names of national heroes who fought for our independence lie the stories of our mostly-forgotten Muslim heroes, including Lapu-Lapu, Sultan Kudarat, and Rajah Sulayman, who displayed courage and integrity.

The senator explained that this is the reason he proposed to add a ninth ray to the sun in the Philippine flag—to acknowledge the courage and integrity of Muslim Filipinos who fought for the nation's independence.

"Our Muslim heroes left an imprint on national history that, at the very least, must be given due recognition in the most heraldic item of national importance—the Philippine flag," he said.

Gordon authored Senate Bill 2590, which proposes that the rays of the sun on the Philippine flag be increased from eight to nine, to symbolize the community of Muslim leaders who defended the country from foreign invasion.

"By adding a ninth ray in the sun to represent our Muslim brothers, I think we make ourselves one with them. They are the Filipinos who were very successful in thwarting colonialism in our country," Gordon said. ***(INQUIRER.net)***

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR MONEY

Braving the crisis to start a business

Editor's Note: This is part of Take Charge of Your Money , a partnership between INQUIRER.net and Citibank to help readers handle their personal finances well.

Question: I have always wanted to start my own business. I love fashion, and I have set my sights on opening a small boutique in Greenhills. Although I am currently working, I plan to resign by August so I can concentrate on my business and prepare for the holiday shopping season. But with the current economic crisis, I am having second thoughts. Is this a good time to start a business? What if things don't go well? — Myra

Answer: A lot of people are faced with the same dilemma, Myra: to start a business now or not? Times are indeed hard, and this is true whether one is aiming to start a business in the Philippines, in Japan, the United States or anywhere else in the world. The global financial crisis has affected everyone, although in different degrees.

But although times are hard, it doesn't mean that we all should hide under the bed. Throughout history, there have always been periods when economies slow down but they always recover after some time. As to when recoveries happen, the length of time vary greatly.

It's true the current times call for more prudence in setting up a business, and for those who already have an existing business, in expanding operations. Credit may be tighter, meaning, banks and financial institutions may be stricter in granting loans to entrepreneur applicants. So before deciding to open a business or expand one, make sure you have enough capital to finance much of the business yourself as possible.

The following are some more tips on how you can tread this new avenue safely and surely:

1. Have a solid business plan.

You may already have an idea of the kind of merchandise you want to sell in your store, but there are a lot of other things to consider. Who is your target market? What does he/she like? How can you entice him/her to go inside your store and make a purchase? Among other things, also consider your pricing strategy—it should be at the right range for your target market so that you won't push him/her away be being too expensive or too cheap. Your business plan should also detail how much you need to sell so you can break even. It should plot an expected timetable for return on invesment (ROI).

2. Have your financial system in order from the get-go.

Make sure that your business registration with the proper government agencies (BIR, DTI, SEC, SSS) are taken care of and you have official receipts and books. Hire an accountant or bookkeeper to set up your financial recording system. Then choose a bank you can build a long relationship with. Ideally, your bank should be near your place of business and should allow access to your account online and on mobile phone. Also, it would be good if you can enroll your bills in your account so you won't have to queue up physically at the bank to pay utility bills – just pay for these online or over the phone. By establishing a good relationship with your bank, you will have built up trust by the time you are ready to take out a loan and avail of other bank services such as ATM payroll services and the like.

3. Avail of insurance.

Get enough insurance coverage so you can get back the cost of your inventory should a fire happen. Choose a reputable insurance company that has a solid track record for decades. Do your research first and find out all you can about the insurance company before signing the deal.

4. Find other revenue streams.

You may want to operate mainly from your Greenhills outlet, but consider joining bazaars in other places during the Christmas season. The overhead is minimal. You may just need additional manpower for the season.

5. Have a safety net.

Going into business entails assuming some risk. Make sure you have your own savings to fall back on should you find yourself having cash flow problems. Make this your emergency fund which should be enough to cover three to six months' worth of your personal expenses. Dip into this fund only when you absolutely need to do so.

6. Lastly, hook up with other entrepreneurs.

There are business organizations for young entrepreneurs out there, such as Network for Enterprising Women, among others. Join groups like this to network and to learn from other successful entrepreneurs.

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Maharlika – PinoyStyle

Sex, lies, drugs top Katrina, Hayden face-off

By CHRISTINE AVENDAÑO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Talk of sex, lies, drugs and video tapes, and an unexpected splash of water, made Thursday's Senate inquiry into the sex video scandal steamier than the foreign film with almost the same title.

The inquiry into the scandal involving cosmetic surgeon Hayden Kho Jr. and actress Katrina Halili became a virtual circus as the ex-lovers faced off and denied each other's statements in connection with his secret video of their lovemaking.

A sideshow came up when a purportedly enraged policeman-turned-tabloid writer poured bottled water on Kho's head at the start of the hearing, which ended with senators unearthing the involvement of big-time drug dealing in the scandal.

The inquiry conducted by the Senate committee on youth, women and family relations chaired by Sen. Ana Consuelo "Jamby" Madrigal started an hour late at 2:40 p.m. because the lawyers of Kho and Halili took time elaborating on their respective positions on whether it should be open to the public.

Senate President Pro Tempore Jinggoy Estrada argued with Kho's lawyer Lorna Kapunan that he wanted Kho to testify openly.

Estrada got more annoyed when Madrigal informed the senators of Kapunan's apparent threat—that she and her client would walk out if the senators insisted on a public hearing.

Media's presence

Kapunan then inquired whether there was a need for the media to be present.

"Whether or not there is media, the law will be made if the Senate so desires," she said.

Countered Estrada: "That statement is uncalled for. I never threatened anybody. What kind of threat? I don't even know you.

"You threatened the committee when you said your group would stage a walkout."

He also told Kapunan "not to question the legislation's intent," and added that she had "no right to lecture us."

"I demand the presence of Kho in this hearing," Estrada said, drawing loud applause from the packed audience made up of spectators and Senate employees.

In the end, Estrada and Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. voted to have Kho testify openly.

Kapunan made an apology, and Estrada accepted it.

Eventually, Kho, accompanied by his mother, was brought in.

As she went to take her seat, a man in a red shirt picked up a bottle of water from the table, opened it, and poured it over Kho's head.

LYN RILLON

Shortly before the Senate hearing on the Kho-Halili sex video turned into a sizzler, ex-police officer and Pagsanjan, Laguna Mayor Abner Afuang (standing, right) pours bottled water on Dr. Hayden Kho who keeps his cool. Afuang is ordered arrested.

As people stared, a Senate security guard grabbed the man from behind and dragged him outside the room.

"Please arrest that man. Arrest that man," Madrigal was heard saying.

Kapunan rose and said: "That's precisely why we objected to a public hearing."

She said it was fortunate that her client was only soaked with water. "It could have been a bullet because of the hatred," she said.

Kho's mother wiped his soaked hair and white shirt with a handkerchief. Kho himself was cool. Halili appeared distraught and close to tears.

Senate sergeant-at-arms Jose Balajadia told the senators that the man was Abner Afuang, a former policeman who, he said, had "a media ID."

It turned out that Afuang is a columnist of the tabloids Hataw and Police Files.

Thursday night, Afuang was taken to the Pasay City prosecutors' office upon the recommendation of the Senate's legal counsel to face charges for disturbing the hearing.

Tears

The hearing eventually proceeded with Halili, 23, tearfully reading a statement on the ordeal she was now facing as a result of the scandal.

Speaking in Filipino, the actress gave thanks for the support that, she said, allowed her to rise from her mistake and the debasement that she had endured from Kho.

She said she was an actress whose job was to provide laughter and fantasy in television and in films, but that she also had a private life like everyone else.

"I loved Hayden," she said, adding that her youth made it easy for her to be blinded that she would "own his heart."

"But like all other relationships that started with a lie, this went nowhere," she said.

Halili wept even more while saying that she did not know "each embrace and kiss" she exchanged with Kho was "scripted."

"I gave my heart and soul wholly to a man who turned out to be doing his own movie," she said, adding:

"I was stupid. Instead of a doctor, he was a director."

Halili also said she had erred in loving Kho and in believing that he loved her back as well.

"He said I was his princess in his second world," she said. "I was young; it was easy to make me believe. I am the victim here. Every day I am the victim each time the video is watched."

She added that even if she were dead, the video would continue to play.

Drugs

Kho said he met Halili in 2007 at the clinic owned by his girlfriend, Dr. Vicki Belo.

He said he performed liposuction on Halili in August 2007 and that soon after, they became text mates.

This was how Kho narrated the purported turn of events:

They soon became lovers and Halili introduced drugs to him in a tryst they had at a hotel in Ortigas.

Halili gave him two Ecstasy pills. He wanted only one, but she told him it would not be effective.

"This resulted in the first video where I was wearing a bandana and briefs," Kho said, referring to the video where they were shown dancing to the music of "Careless Whisper."

He said he could name the people who bought drugs for Halili.

He claimed that he had been clean since his confinement at Makati Medical Center in December 2008, when he tried to kill himself with a drug overdose.

Denials

Halili denied that she had introduced Kho to drugs, or that she was taking drugs herself.

She also denied being aware of the camera when they were having sex.

She said she would undergo a drug test at the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) on Friday.

Kho said the drugs had come from Halili, and that being a doctor, he knew that "Ecstasy stays in the blood for eight days, and it will stay for six years in the hair."

Kho-Halili face off: Drugs, sex, love

By MAILA AGER
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA, Philippines—There were water splashing, tears, and revelations of drugs, sex, and love as a Senate committee began its inquiry into the sex videos involving controversial cosmetic surgeon Hayden Kho and actress Katrina Halili.

Kho, 29, said he was high on drugs when he videotaped his trysts with Halili and other female celebrities.

Kho said his relationship with Halili revolved around "drugs and sex, drugs and sex" and he pointed to the actress as the one who influenced him to use "ecstasy."

The actress, teary-eyed, denied this.

"Hindi po totoo na nagbibigay ako sa kaniya ng drugs," said Halili as she also rejected the surgeon's claim she was into drugs.

She stressed her relationship with Kho was beyond sexual. "Minahal ko si Hayden."

But Halili said she had no inkling Kho's "kiss and embrace were simply scripted."

"Wala po akong malay na ang bawat yakap at halik ay scripted," she said. "Buong-buo kong binigay ang puso at kaluluwa ko sa isang lalaking gumagawa pala ng sarili nyang pelikula."

"Ang tanga ko, imbes na doctor, director pala," Halili said.

Halili said the scandal brought shame to her and her family. The videos have been uploaded on the Internet and are also being sold in the underground market.

"Opo artista po ako. Trabaho ko po ang maghatid ng tuwa. Pantasya ng telebisyon at pelikula. Pero tulad ng iba, may pribadong buhay din po," Halili said.

"Sa pagkakataon pong ito, dangal ko at dangal ng pamilya ko ang pinag-uusapan dito."

Who's the culprit?

Kho said he suspected his friends businessman Eric Chua and Bistek Rosario were the ones who circulated the sex videos.

Vicki Belo, former girlfriend of Kho, had said the videos of Kho with Halili and other women were first stored in a computer hard drive belonging to the Belo Medical Group.

Her lawyer Adel Tamano said Belo had asked Chua to delete the videos. But Chua, instead of deleting the videos, apparently made a copy and even gave Belo a CD containing the files, he added.

Water splashing

Earlier, as Halili was entering the hearing room commotion ensued after former Laguna mayor Abner Afuang splashed water on Kho.

"Arrest that man," shouted Senator Maria Ana "Jamby" Madrigal, who chairs the Senate committee on youth, women and family relations, which is hearing the case.

Afuang was later arrested by the Senate Sergeant-at-Arms.

Mendoza arrives home without fanfare

By RUBEN V. NEPALES
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LOS ANGELES—I'm still stunned since Brillante "Dante" Mendoza shocked the film world when he won the Best Director prize last Sunday at the Cannes Film Festival.

I keep looking at the online lists of directors who have previously received the award. Wikipedia has an image of the national flag of each winner's country and his name alongside it. Dante's name is already on the list, along with an image of the Philippine colors.

Dante has joined the list of winners that includes Francois Truffaut, who won for "The 400 Blows," one of the all-time best films; Terrence Malick ("Days of Heaven"), Werner Herzog ("Fitzcarraldo") and Julian Schnabel ("The Diving Bell and the Butterfly").

Winners' list

The other names in the list are equally mind-boggling: Ingmar Bergman, Luis Buñuel, Robert Bresson, Costa Gavras, Nagisa Oshima, Bertrand Tavernier, Martin Scorsese, Wim Wenders, Joel Coen, Robert Altman, Mike Leigh, Wong Kar-Wai, Pedro Almodovar, David Lynch, Gus Van Sant and Michael Haneke, among others.

The roster of directors that Dante was up against in Cannes was equally formidable. Among them were Jane Campion, whose "Bright Star" entry inspired many critics to swoon; Michael Haneke, a previous Best Director awardee, whose "The White Ribbon" won the Palme d'Or; Quentin Tarantino; Alain Resnais, the revered master who is one of the key figures of the French New Wave movement and was given the Lifetime Achievement Award during Sunday's awards ceremonies; Ken Loach; Pedro Almodovar; Ang Lee; Johnnie To; and Lars Von Trier.

Pulitzer equivalent

It's sad therefore that Dante arrived in Manila on Tuesday without fanfare. Do the authorities realize what Dante had just achieved? It's like he won the equivalent of a Pulitzer Prize or a heavyweight boxing title match.

"It was extremely hectic in Cannes," Dante texted me recently—quite an understatement. "I feel extremely privileged to win the award. Just to be in competition two years in a row is a big achievement already. But winning an award was great, especially when I was up against the giants. I feel so blessed and honored. This is not just about the award; it's about what I want to say in the film and how the audience reacts and does something about it."

Other 'awardees'

He added: "I share my award with Coco Martin whom I deeply respect not only as a friend but also as an artist; another friend, Raymond Nullan, and my daughter Angelica."

We asked Tikoy Aguiluz, Cinemanila International Film Festival director, to share his Cannes 2009 experience, especially about how Quentin Tarantino himself loved "Kinatay." Below are excerpts from his e-mail:

Maharlika – Opinyon

Estrada is damaged goods

Setting aside momentarily the legal issues related to whether or not he is eligible to run for president again in 2010, deposed, convicted (for plunder) and pardoned President Joseph Estrada is persistently trying to play kingmaker in the 2010 election. He has raised his public profile (to the extent of sharing the limelight with boxing champion Manny Pacquiao), converting the run-up to the election into a burlesque in the theater of the absurd.

Estrada has sustained his illusions of making a political comeback with the threat that he would run again for president in 2010 if the opposition fails to unite behind a common candidate. He has identified the terrain on which the presidential battle would be fought: a head-on clash between him and Vice President Noli de Castro for the masa (masses) constituency, which, according to him, would be decisive in determining the outcome of the election.

"Only Noli and I have masa appeal," Estrada said. "I can feel that he (Noli) also appeals to the D and E sectors." He noted that the poor comprise 80 and 90 percent of the voters. He claims that only De Castro could rival him in winning the support of the poor. If both he and De Castro faced off for the presidency, he said, "Noli would be a tough candidate to beat ... he would be a formidable opponent."

Estrada is making the point that, since the opposition has not yet found a unifying candidate, then it is obvious, by implication, that it has no other choice than him for a standard bearer to face De Castro.

Both Estrada and De Castro have a common background as media celebrities—Estrada in the movies and De Castro as a radio news reader and commentator. Estrada was vice president when he ran for president, and De Castro is the incumbent vice president. Like Estrada, De Castro served in the Senate before being elected vice president.

Estrada's claim that only he and De Castro, among a field of up to nine presidential aspirants, can win the support of the poor as a constituency rests on dubious assumptions. One fragile assumption is that masa politics would be the decisive determinant of the outcome of the next polls, as it was in the 1998 election, which Estrada won with the smashing plurality of nearly 40 percent. Estrada was immensely popular and the front runner in the 1998 campaign.

Analysis

By AMANDO DORONILA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

At this stage of the presidential campaign, with the election a year away, there is scant sign that De Castro is enjoying immense popularity among the masses. The February Pulse Asia survey found the election a "very close race" among four likely candidates: De Castro, Sen. Francis Escudero, Estrada and Sen. Manuel Villar. All four were found by the survey to be running neck-and-neck: De Castro, 19 percent; Escudero, 17 percent; Estrada 16 percent; and Villar 15 percent. No one was breaking away from the pack, including those perceived to be populists or with masa affinities (Estrada and De Castro). The rest of the pack were clustered around the 12 to one-percent voting preference. There is no sign that masa politics is going to figure decisively in the next few months before the election.

The masses are not showing up as a constituency craving either for Estrada or De Castro. This is 2009, not 1998, and the dynamics of the 2010 election are vastly different from those of 1998. Masa politics, or the rich-versus-poor theme, is not the name of the game in 2010.

Estrada is trying to bring back the 1998 scenario as the template for 2010, but the reason masa politics is not the winning formula this time is that Estrada abused the masa theme with the corruption scandals and the debauchery of his administration.

Estrada's excesses did not only lead to his impeachment, the collapse of his government and the plunder charges that came after he was overthrown by Edsa II. The plunder conviction undermined Estrada's masa slogan, after it was proven during the impeachment trial and the trial in the Sandiganbayan that the poor did not benefit under the short-lived Estrada administration. Only Estrada became rich.

No one, not even De Castro, among the current contenders for the presidency can use the masa theme to help his campaign. Estrada's performance devalued the masa mantra.

Another thing debunked by Estrada's performance was media and show-biz celebrity status as an electoral asset.

In the case of De Castro, there's no basis for the assumption that he is the man to beat in 2010 because he is claimed to be a man of the masses. He has no chemistry with the masses. There's no way the masses can identify with him. He can only benefit from dissociating himself from Estrada's mesmerizing formula of reworking or updating the discredited masa theme.

We are not even sure if De Castro would be the administration's presidential candidate. If ever that happens, De Castro would be burdened by a more devastating issue: association with the outgoing administration. That will happen if the lame-duck presidency fails to pull off its scheme to extend its term beyond 2010.

Estrada is not in a position to set the agenda or the strategy of the opposition for 2010. He is damaged political goods after his impeachment and conviction for plunder, even though he was granted executive clemency by his successor in one of the crassest abuses of presidential pardon for political expediency. It's hard to see how Estrada could ever return to power with the stigma tattooed all over his body.

EDITORIAL

The flu

The total number of confirmed A(H1N1) virus cases in the country has now risen to 14. And the Department of Health says we should expect the total to rise some more. Time to double our efforts in preventing, or at least slowing down, the spread of the so-called swine flu.

The good news is that the very first two patients are expecting to be discharged from the hospital as soon as new medical tests confirm their full recovery. Health Undersecretary Mario Villaverde said the two were no longer infectious. The bad news is that two new patients could be considered, in Health Secretary Francisco Duque III's words, the country's first "second-generation transmission" of the swine flu virus. The two were not infected overseas, but from an "index case," one of those patients who had caught the virus while abroad.

Thus, Duque said, the DoH was "expecting more confirmed cases in the coming weeks due to its intensive contact tracing and heightened awareness among the public."

First things first. "There is no cause for the public to panic," Duque emphasized in a news briefing. He said the case fatality ratio for the virus was "very low" (less than 1 per 1,000 cases). He added that the emerging "global consensus is that [the virus] is a mild form of influenza illness." The chief of the National Epidemiology Center, Dr. Eric Tayag, also said that the medical condition of the new patients was not serious.

Second, more and more Filipinos are now aware of what to do. "What is important," Duque said, "is that anyone who has traveled to an affected country or has been exposed to a confirmed case and manifests symptoms like fever, cough or sore throat [should] go to a doctor or call the DoH hotline, 711-1001."

But an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Duque is right to strongly advise the public not to panic. At the same time, he and other government officials must come to terms with the reality that, for many Filipinos, heightened awareness does not necessarily translate into effective prevention. Much good has been done by the new emphasis on vigorous hand-washing. This is a good thing, and should be continued, with the greater participation of the private sector.

More companies can anticipate the possible spread of the virus by issuing, post-haste, new employee guidelines. If possible, an employee who comes down with any of the symptoms of the swine flu can arrange to work from his or her house. Proper hygiene can be re-emphasized, and institutions must provide clean garbage cans.

We are, famously, a gregarious people. It will be difficult to prevent people from attending social gatherings like weddings or birthday parties. The example of the first two second-generation patients, who caught the virus while attending a wedding in Zambales province on May 17, may make many pause, but it will not stop many of us from showing up.

All the more reason, then, to step up our efforts to prevent or slow down the spread of the virus, with the vigorous support of those institutions—business enterprises, schools, churches—that depend on the very idea of people coming together.

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Epidemics in Rizal's time

Over the weekend, I received a funny text stating that Katrina Halili, she of sex video scandal fame, was positive for swine flu. She had admitted on nation-wide TV, *"Binaboy nila ako!"*

For the past few weeks, we have been bombarded with news on H1N1. While the spread of swine flu virus is cause for concern, why do the media play it up when it has killed less than 100 people worldwide? Surely there are other health issues, like cancer, AIDS, tuberculosis, and hypertension that claim more lives than swine flu, but these are not written about.

Should we bring out the face masks and run to the drugstore for swine flu medicine? I wonder what historians of the future will make of our times.

Looking Back

By AMBETH OCAMPO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Young historians like Francis Gealogo are doing demographic history, painting a new picture of the past, using census data. They also explore health and disease to find yet another window to the past.

Today's swine flu has been traced to Mexico, but two centuries ago we also received smallpox from Mexico under different circumstances. On Sept. 1, 1803, Carlos IV of Spain, "desiring to ameliorate the havoc wrought by smallpox epidemics in his dominions in the Indies and in order to furnish his loyal subjects the protection they deserve," ordered a medical mission to the Philippines. This was headed by Francisco Javier de Balmis who took the vaccine not in bottles but in the live bodies of Mexican boys. A ship sailed from Spain on Nov. 30, 1803 carrying the orphans, some of whom had smallpox which, during the course of the voyage, was transferred by inoculation, arm to arm, to the healthy boys so that smallpox antibodies would arrive alive and well at the destination.

After two years sailing in the Americas, the Balmis expedition arrived in Manila on April 15, 1805 on the frigate *Magallanes*. The next day, the children of Spanish Governor-General Rafael M. de Aguilar were inoculated, proving to a fearful public that a cure was at hand.

In gratitude for this gift of a smallpox vaccine, the City of Manila erected a statue of Carlos IV in 1824, and it now stands in front of the Manila Cathedral.

I tried in vain to get the names of the 25 Mexican orphans who brought smallpox antibodies to Manila as well as the names of the Filipino orphans who carried the antibodies to other parts of the Philippines and elsewhere. Balmis has since been honored by having a street in Manila named after him as well as a historical marker installed in the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine in Muntinlupa in 2004.

Aside from dry census records, we have more vivid descriptions of death and disease from other sources, like the correspondence of Rizal with his family. In 1882, a comet ripped the sky and people read it as an omen of bad fortune. That year, the Rizal family endured earthquakes, typhoons, flooding, and a cholera epidemic. Rizal was in Madrid studying medicine, and the letters from home were quite depressing. Paciano in September 1882 informed his younger brother:

"Now that the plague is at its peak, an average of 15 persons die daily. From night to morning healthy and robust men become corpses or at least completely unrecognizable and emaciated, hovering between life and death. Those who succumb to any other disease deserve to be envied, because at least, they are attended and taken care of at their homes, they are taken to church and are buried in the cemetery, but the victims of this scourge cannot comfort themselves that they would be treated thus. Their relatives, even the close ones, flee; they are not taken care of and if sometimes they are attended to, they become a heavy burden to their companions in the house who fear contagion. They are wrapped up and buried with the Chinese. It is a sad thing to die under these circumstances and of this disease. One is exposed, to be devoured by dogs. I doubt very much if the grave has depth of two spans, and there is a throng of dogs around."

Famine followed the epidemic because few were left to tend the fields or harvest the crops. People were in mourning or hiding from the disease. Manzanilla was out of stock at the drugstores and cognac was scarce, and if it could be found at all, it was expensive. Stinking food like dried fish was banned. Schools were closed. Towns and provinces were isolated from each other. Homes of infected people were burned. The dead were not brought to church for services but buried hastily. People prayed in church, held processions, and invoked the intercession of San Roque against pestilence. Ships in the port of Manila were fumigated and quarantined for 12 hours.

Saturnina Rizal in December 1882 described the end of the cholera epidemic and the beginning of another deadlier scourge "dry cholera" or beri-beri:

"There is a new disease prevailing here now. It starts with the swelling of the feet and the legs until the knee. Then difficulty in breathing ensues and two hours later the patient is dead. Toneng, mother of Pangoy, died of this disease; Compadre Gena Pano is gravely ill of this disease also… Two children of Tia Tomasa died. One of them was Ate; I don't know who the other one was. Tio Bindoy died. Perhaps you will not like this news very much because they are sad, but I want you to know everything."

The history of health in the Philippines is yet to be written and it will make for engaging reading.

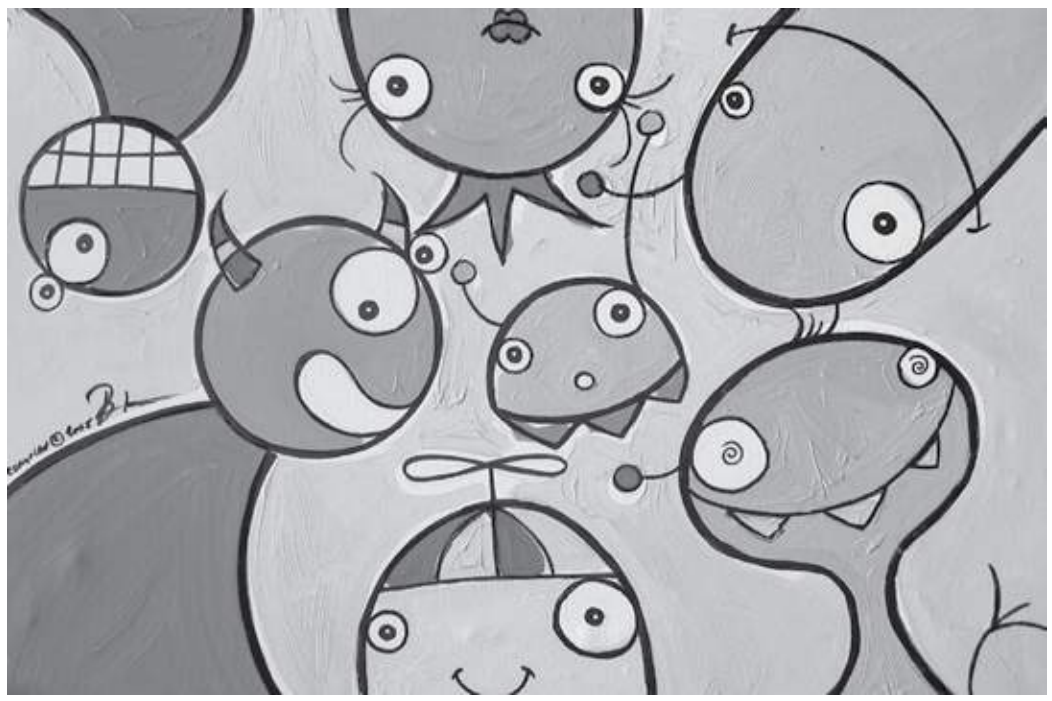
Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu.

Samu't Sari

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Happy wedding anniversary to Ton & Lala Arriola! "Cherish the memories of yesterday, celebrate the happiness of today, and together look forward to new hopes & joys for a beautiful tomorrow!" Greetings from the Demapans & Marriage Encounter Family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



SMILE PROJECT

"Untitled," one of the works of Boston-based Filipino artist Bren Bataclan, who is making waves across the U.S. with his creative altruism project called "The Smile Project." Bataclan will be featured in one of Katie Couric's CBS Evening News segment. ***See related story on Page 12.***

MARCONI CALINDAS

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Belated happy birthday to Dan Albert "DA" Puri, shown here waiting for the "lechon" to be completely roasted. DA celebrated his 7th birthday last Sunday, May 17, 2009, at Shirley's Restaurant in Susupe. Greetings come from dad Mel and mom Jenny.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dan Albert "DA" Puri waits with his friends for the party to start. From left, Boboy, Grace, DA, and brother Jolo.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dan Albert "DA" Puri gives a big smile after saying his birthday.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

WELCOME TO SAIPAN

Ceejay Samonte arrives May 24 from the Philippines via Guam for a vacation here on Saipan after graduating from La Consolacion College of Manila. Ceejay was met at the airport by Mommy Didith. This is Ceejay's third time to spend her vacation here.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CONGRATULATIONS

Marcelo and Marilou Masilungan are proud parents to Camille Joy P. Masilungan who graduated elementary class valedictorian and received the Highest Grade Point Average and Eagle Awards during the Grace Christian Academy Graduation on May 27. Also, their son, Marcelo "Marcky" Masilungan, Jr., a second-grader, received four academic awards during Tuesday's GCA's recognition program. Mar Masilungan is a Technical Support Engineer at White Coconut Computer Services and volunteer-instructor in Building and Fixing Computers Course at the Philippine Overseas Labor Office-Philippine Consulate General. His wife, Malou, works as Assistant Sales Manager at Megabyte Computer Service and Sales Center.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Ceejay Samonte is welcomed at the Saipan International Airport by her mommy Didith and sister Camille upon her arrival Sunday from the Philippines.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

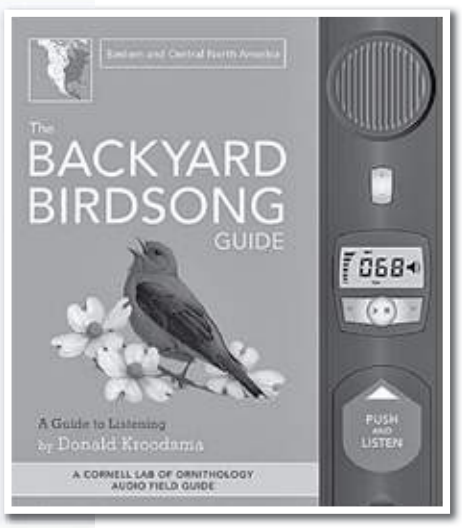
Frances P. Leon Guerrero is turning 50 today, Saturday, while her daughter Chrishia P. Leon Guerrero is going 17 tomorrow, Sunday. "Happy birthday to my wife and daughter! I always love you. Many more birthdays to come!" From papa and family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Youngstyle

Bird-watching basics

TheCornellLab of Ornithology
All About Birds
Find
Birding Basics
Living Bird
Get Involved
Bird Guide
Blue Jay
Cyanocitta cristata
IUCN Conservation Status: Least Concern
This common, large songbird is familiar to many people, with its perky crest; blue, white, and black plumage; and noisy calls. Blue Jays are known for their intelligence and complex social systems with tight family bonds. Their fondness for acorns is credited with helping spread oak trees after the last glacial period.
Real science for real kids!
BirdSleuth educational resources for the classroom and beyond!
Citizen Science • Inquiry
For complete information on this species, visit The Birds of North America Online.
Identification
Life History
Sound
Video
Keys to Identification
Size & Shape
Large crested songbird with broad, rounded tail. Blue Jays are smaller than crows, larger than robins.
Color Pattern
White or light gray underneath, various shades of blue, black, and white above.
Crows and Jays
Typical Voice
Behavior
Blue Jays make a large variety of calls that carry long distances. Most calls produced while the jay is perched within a tree. Usually flies across open areas silently, especially during migration. Stuffs food items in throat pouch to cache elsewhere; when eating, holds a seed or nut in feet and pecks it open.
Habitat
Blue Jays are birds of forest edges. A favorite food is acorns, and they are often found near oaks, in forests, woodlots, towns, cities, parks.
Range Map
Blue Jay
Cyanocitta cristata


The BACKYARD BIRDSONG GUIDE
A Guide to Listening
by Donald Kroodsma
A CORNELL LAB OF ORNITHOLOGY AUDIO FIELD GUIDE
PUSH AND LISTEN

THE WASHINGTON POST

"The Backyard Birdsong Guide" (top), by Donald Kroodsma, has pictures of 75 common birds and a player to hear their songs, plus great descriptions and information. All About Birds, produced by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, is a great Web site to find pictures and videos of birds and to hear their songs.

Here are some helpful things to have on hand if you want to start bird-watching in your back yard.

A notebook

It's hard to remember what you've seen, so jot down what the bird looks like and what it sounds like. After a while you'll remember the bird and the song.

Binoculars: Optional, but even an inexpensive pair will help you spot birds in nearby trees.

Song book

Try "The Backyard Birdsong Guide: Eastern and Central North America," by Donald Kroodsma. With pictures of 75 common birds and a player to hear their songs, plus great descriptions and information.

Field guide

LocalBirds.com has small laminated foldout guides that are great for quick reference. Not all areas are represented, but there are several guides for Florida, Texas and California (see list on the Web site).

The Internet

All About Birds is a great Web site to find pictures and videos of birds and to hear their songs. Produced by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, it's at www.allaboutbirds.org.

The Count

The Great Backyard Bird Count (or GBBC) is an event that takes place over four days in February each year. To participate, you watch birds in your yard, a nearby park or maybe at your school, then report what you saw by entering your bird list online at www.birdsource.org. If you click on the site's GBBC icon, you'll find a special section for kids with games and bird songs. ***((c) 2009, The Washington Post)***

A FIELD GUIDE

By MARGARET WEBB PRESSLER
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

Northern Cardinal

One of the most common species in the Southeast, found all over the city and suburbs.

Color: If you see a bright red bird, it's the male; the female is pale brown with red tinges.

Song: Very musical. Sounds like "cheer-cheer-cheer" or "birdie-birdie-birdie."

Finding one: In low shrubbery; often on or near the ground.

Fun fact: A male-female pair will be mates until one of them dies.

American Robin

Seen easily in area yards and parks. A larger songbird, at eight to 11 inches long.

Color: Gray-brown with orange breast and dark head.

Song: Pretty and repetitious. Sings constantly. Sounds like "cheerily-cheer up-cheer up-cheerily-cheer up."

Finding one: Hopping on the ground. Flicks tail down a few times after landing.

Fun fact: Robins like to eat earthworms in the morning and fruit later in the day.

Gray Catbird

Seen mostly in thick shrubs and low trees. Dislikes flight through open areas.

Color: Slate gray all over with a black cap.

Song: Mimics other birds, but also has its own song that sounds like a cat's meow.

Finding one: Hops around energetically, preferring short flights from tree to tree.

Fun fact: The catbird's song may last up to 10 minutes.

Mockingbird

A larger bird, like the robin, but thinner, with long legs. Very active and bold.

Color: Light gray all over; charcoal wings have bright white patches.

Song: Mimics songs of many other birds in a constant stream of different sounds.

Finding one: On power lines and branches; constantly moving. Flashes of white appear when flying.

Fun fact: Mockingbirds learn new songs throughout life — up to 200!

Blue Jay

Handsome, fearless and large — nearly a foot long. Eats anything.

Color: White breast with blue feathers flecked with black and white.

Song: Noisy rather than musical; very loud. Sings while sitting, but quiet in flight.

Finding one: Loves to eat acorns, so it's common near oak trees in parks and yards.

Fun fact: Migrates in a seemingly haphazard way that scientists don't understand.

Carolina Wren

Extremely common, with a loud, pretty song for such a tiny bird.

Color: Brown with rust-colored underbelly and a white eye stripe.

Song: Musical, frequent song, sounds like a quick "tea kettle-tea kettle-tea kettle."

Finding one: Often sings at dawn. Common in urban areas, will nest in a hanging plant.

Fun fact: A captive Carolina wren sang 3,000 times in a single day.

American Goldfinch

A little creature with a lot of flash. A favorite for birdfeeders.

Color: Male is bright yellow in spring, duller in winter. Female is olive-brown with some yellow.

Song: Twitters and warbles with random sounds and phrases.

Finding one: Acrobatic and bouncy. Likes weedy fields in spring, backyard birdfeeders in winter.

Fun fact: Among the strictest vegetarians of all birds. No insects wanted!

Downy Woodpecker

Tiny, active acrobats found in wooded and residential areas and city parks.

Color: Black and white, almost a checkerboard pattern. Red spot on head.

Song: Sounds like "pik-pik-pik-whinny-whinny." Often followed by a quick drumbeat.

Finding one: Around trees and backyard birdfeeders. Often hops around with other tiny birds.

Fun fact: Pounds beak into trees mostly to attract a mate.

It's getting hot in the Arctic

By MARGARET WEBB PRESSLER
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—If you think summers where you live are hot, you should try the Arctic.

Seriously. For the past two summers, a record amount of ice in the Arctic has melted, and it could happen again this year. And just recently, a large ice bridge in Antarctica broke apart.

These events have focused more attention on how global warming is affecting the ice cover of the North and South Poles. Since there's only one degree of temperature difference between liquid water and ice, the slightest warming of the climate can have an impact. (Think about it: At 32 degrees, you have an ice cube, but at 33 degrees, you have a glass of water!)

We asked some experts about what changes kids are likely to see in their lifetimes as a result of the ice melt.

It Is Already Happening

There are changes taking place around the North Pole right now because of melting ice. Arctic animals such as polar bears and sea lions have smaller areas in which to live, hunt and raise their young. Hunting patterns of some native communities have been hurt, too.

With less ice, the Arctic also is more open to shipping, fishing and other commercial activities, such as oil drilling, which could hurt the fragile polar environment.

Even visitors who want to explore the beautiful wilderness pose a threat. "A lot of people are concerned about an increase in tourism," said John Walsh, who teaches global climate change at the University of Alaska.

What Could Happen?

Scientists predict that melting polar ice will cause sea levels all around the world, not just in the Arctic, to rise at least one foot by the year 2100. That would hurt some waterfront communities, especially during storms.

But there is debate among climate experts about how fast the ice will melt. Some scientists suggest seawater could rise as much as seven to nine feet by the end of this century. That could put parts of New York City and Miami underwater.

"Most likely the truth is somewhere in the middle," Walsh said.

The Good News

There is still time to stop, or at least slow, the melting process. Even if the ice at the poles were to melt completely, the worst impact wouldn't be for hundreds of years, according to James Wang, a climate scientist with the Environmental Defense Fund.

That long time frame gives efforts to stop global warming a chance to work. Slowing global warming now "would reduce the amount of ice melt and the amount of sea level rise," Wang said.

And the ice cover in Antarctica (or the South Pole), which is far greater than the ice cover in the North Pole, is melting much more slowly. So the Arctic ice melt can be viewed as an early warning signal, Walsh said. "If we pay attention to it, it could save us trouble down the road."

Ever wondered if you can catch asthma?

By HOWARD BENNETT
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

Since the allergy season is upon us, I wanted to talk a little bit about asthma. Doctors see kids with asthma almost every day during the spring and summer. Although asthma is common, it is often misunderstood.

First, what is asthma? It's a lung condition that causes a person's bronchial tubes (they bring oxygen to the lungs) to tighten suddenly, swell and make extra mucus. Although asthma can be serious, most kids have milder forms of the condition. The more you know about asthma, the better you will be able to treat it.

People with asthma usually cough and wheeze. Sometimes they have trouble breathing and have to go to the doctor or the hospital to be treated. Think about an asthma attack like this: If you normally got oxygen through a big pipe and suddenly were getting it through a straw, you might gasp for breath.

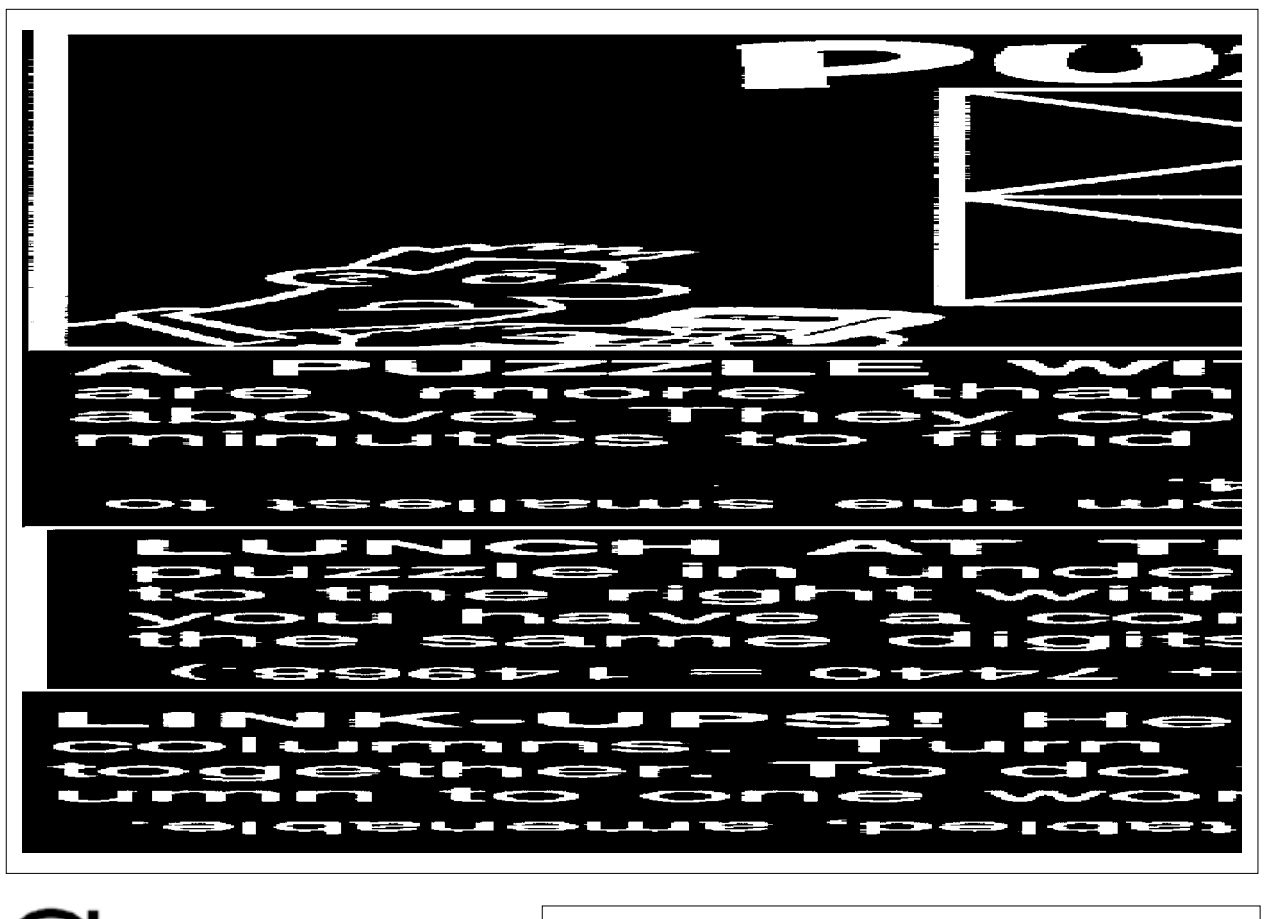
Asthma is usually triggered by allergies, pollution or respiratory infections. Although colds and the flu can set off an asthma attack, you cannot catch asthma from another person!

Public Service Announcement: Don't forget to cover your mouth when you cough! (That's all the more important because of the recent cases of swine flu!)

Some people have asthma attacks while exercising. If you have trouble breathing when you run around a lot, tell a parent. A doctor can give you medicine to take before you exercise.

About 75 percent of kids who develop asthma have a family history of the condition. That means most kids with asthma have a relative who has the problem or had it as a child.

Bennett is a Washington pediatrician and an author of health-related books for kids.



Strange BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

■ It was 20th-century architect and businessman Charles Luckman—known as "the Boy Wonder of American Business"—who made the following sage observation: "The trouble with America is that there are far too many wide-open spaces surrounded by teeth."

■ The Balkan country of Serbia has seen an odd trend in funerals lately: air-conditioned coffins. Even though the coffins cost approximately $6,600, a casket company that offers the chillers is having a hard time keeping them in stock.

■ Experts claim that if you make a line of flour on the floor—or the counter, or table, or wherever you're having trouble with the pests—ants won't cross it.

■ Back in the day, if you wanted to be a Pony Express rider, you couldn't weigh more than 120 pounds.

■ Those who study such things—and, to be honest, I'm not entirely sure who those people would be—say that in the United States, people who live on the East Coast wash their clothes the least often, while those in the South wash them the most (a fact for which I, who live in the sweaty South, am eternally grateful).

■ The town of Key Largo, Fla., did not exist before the 1948 film of that name starring Humphrey Bogart made it famous.

■ Harry Benson, a photographer who covered the Beatles in the early days of their success, says that the Fab Four celebrated their first No. 1 U.S. hit, "I Want to Hold Your Hand," by having a pillow fight in their hotel room.

■ An interesting note for all the towheads out there: In ancient Rome, prostitutes were required to dye their hair blonde, if it wasn't already that shade.

■ ■ ■

Thought for the Day: "Laughter and tears are both responses to frustration and exhaustion. I myself prefer to laugh, since there is less cleaning up to do afterward."—Kurt Vonnegut

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MAGIC MAZE ● OIL DRILLING RIG TERMS

W F C A R O T A L U M U C C A
D M O N K E Y B O A R D C E M
O U D Y W U K E R P N R L L A
G D R J H F V A D B O Z X O S
H P I V T I R E H W Q O M H T
O U L K R K I H N S F D B T I
U M L D Z Y E B W I E V T A P
S P P R R A L L O C L L I R D
E O I Q O O N K L A W T A C U
T L P K C I H F D Y C A A H M
Z X E K D A E H G N I S A C S

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Accumulator	Crown block	Mast	Rathole
Casing head	Drill collar	Monkeyboard	Shale shaker
Catline	Drill pipe	Mud pits	Top drive
Catwalk	Kelly	Mud pump	

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	−		x		16
÷		+		−	
	+		x		18
+		x		x	
	÷		+		10
11		9		14	

1 2 2 3 4 6 7 8 9

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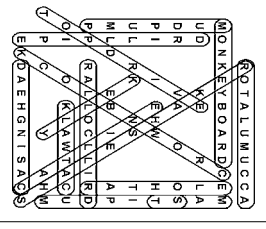
MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



GO FIGURE ANSWER

	14		9		11
10	7	+	3	÷	9
	x		x		+
18	6	x	1	+	2
	−		+		÷
16	8	x	2	−	4

Why don't people like my dog?

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: My dog "Kip" is really friendly and wouldn't harm a fly. When I take him out for walks he likes to go right up to people and sometimes jumps up on them for a friendly pat. But last week, this woman yelled at me, telling me to watch out or she would call animal control! What was her problem?—Keri in Worcester, Mass.

DEAR KERI: Honestly, the problem wasn't hers—it's yours. I'm sure Kip is a wonderful dog and just as friendly as you say. The trouble is, people on the street don't know that. They just see a dog running up and jumping on them, and they're not sure of Kip's intent.

A great many people are terrified of dogs, Keri. It's no laughing matter, either—most of those who are fearful of dogs had some traumatic event in their past. But even if they don't fear them, just the sight of a strange dog charging at them can incite a fearful reaction.

It's also an invasion of people's privacy—their personal space—and just bad etiquette all around to allow your dog to jump on them.

As Kip's owner, it's your responsibility to control his behavior. The older he gets and the more he's allowed to run up and jump on people, the harder it is to train him out of it. And you need to train him out of this behavior, pronto.

I recommend that you sign up for behavior training classes as soon as possible. Attend these sessions with Kip, listen closely to the instructor and follow his or her advice.

Remember that pets are a part of our community, and like every other member of a community they must follow some rules in order for everyone to get along. It's up to you to show Kip how to behave on his daily walks.

■ ■ ■

Send your tips, questions and comments to Paw's Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or e-mail them to pawscorner@hotmail.com.

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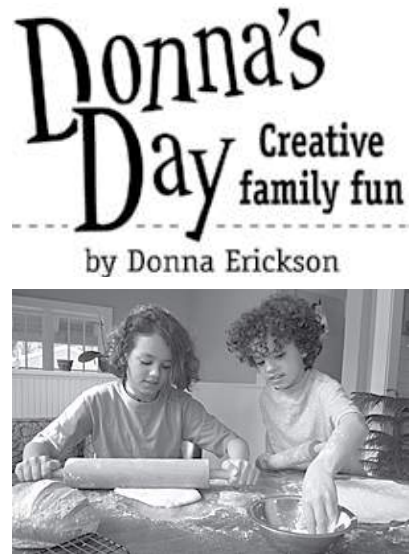
No-knead bread recipe for busy families



Get rolling in the dough using this amazing no-knead recipe that bakes up four 1-pound loaves of tasty artisan bread for around $2. I'm not kidding. Less than a dollar a loaf. It's not only easy on your budget, but also quick and effortless to prepare, as authors Jeff Hertzberg and Zoe Francois describe in their best-selling book that is creating a buzz far and wide, "Artisan Bread in Five Minutes a Day" (St. Martin's Press).

When I stopped by Zoe's kitchen, her active sons were shaping dough for their own pizzas. "Inventing nutritious recipes and eating together are important to our family," says Zoe. "When kids get involved in cooking and baking healthy foods, they'll eat what they make."

For the master bread recipe, let kids loose to measure flour, salt, water and yeast in a bucket. They'll love stirring up the concoction with a wooden spoon and their hands. Let it rise, and you're ready to bake bread for up to two weeks. You can even adapt the recipe for sweet breads, flatbreads and pizza.

Give it a try, and discover the fun of rolling in the dough.

Here's what you'll need:

■ 3 cups lukewarm water
■ 1 1/2 tablespoons granulated yeast
■ 1 1/2 tablespoons kosher salt
■ 6 1/2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour

Mix together ingredients in a 5-quart food-grade lidded bucket or container. Cover loosely, let rise at room temperature for about two hours, then refrigerate for up to two weeks. Bake some of the dough now, if you wish.

To prepare a loaf, cut off a grapefruit-size piece of dough, sprinkle flour on it and briefly shape it into a ball with flour-covered hands. Allow to rest for 40 minutes on a pizza peel or wooden board covered with parchment paper or sprinkled with cornmeal.

Twenty minutes before baking, preheat oven to 450 F and set a baking stone on a rack in the center of the oven and an empty broiler tray on the lower rack. When ready to bake, dust the top of the loaf with flour. An adult should make a 1/4-inch-deep crisscross slash on top with a sharp knife and slide the dough onto the baking stone. Pour a cup of hot water into broiler pan before closing the oven door.

Bake for 30 minutes, or until crust is browned. Let cool. Slice and serve.

Extra resource: Watch Jeff and Zoe prepare the complete recipe online at www.artisanbreadinfive.com. Click on "Video."

■ ■ ■

Donna Erickson's award-winning television series "Donna's Day" airs on public television nationwide. Visit www.donnasday.com to find out when it airs on your local PBS station and to sign up for Donna's e-newsletter.

(c) 2009 Donna Erickson
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Life & Style

Budding neurosurgeon from Kansas is top speller

WASHINGTON (AP)—Cool and collected, Kavya Shivashankar wrote out every word on her palm and always ended with a smile. The 13-year-old Kansas girl saved the biggest smile for last, when she rattled off the letters to "Laodicean" to become the nation's spelling champion.

The budding neurosurgeon from Olathe, Kan., outlasted 11 finalists Thursday night to win the Scripps National Spelling Bee, taking home more than $40,000 in cash and prizes and, of course, the huge champion's trophy.

"I can't believe it happened," Kavya said. "It feels kind of unreal."

After spelling the winning word, which means lukewarm or indifferent in religion or politics, Kavya got huge hugs from father Mirle, mother Sandy and little sister Vanya.

"The competitiveness is in her," Mirle Shivashankar said. "But she doesn't show that. She still has that smile. That's her quality."

Kavya won in her fourth appearance at the bee, having finished 10th, eighth and fourth over the last three years. She enjoys playing the violin, bicycling, swimming and learning Indian classical dance, and her role model is Nupur Lala, the 1999 champion featured in the documentary "Spellbound."

"This is the moment we've been waiting for; it's a dream come true," Mirle said. "We haven't skipped meals, we haven't lost sleep, but we've skipped a lot of social time."

That would be any kind of celebration for Kavya's birthday. She turned 13 last week but was too busy planning for the bee to have a party.

She'll have more time for such festivities now that she's retiring as a speller, but she'll eventually need another outlet for her competitive nature. Her father said she might enter the "Brain Bee," a science-oriented contest that should suit her career goal well.

"But I don't think anything can replace spelling," Kavya said. "Spelling has been such a big part of my life."

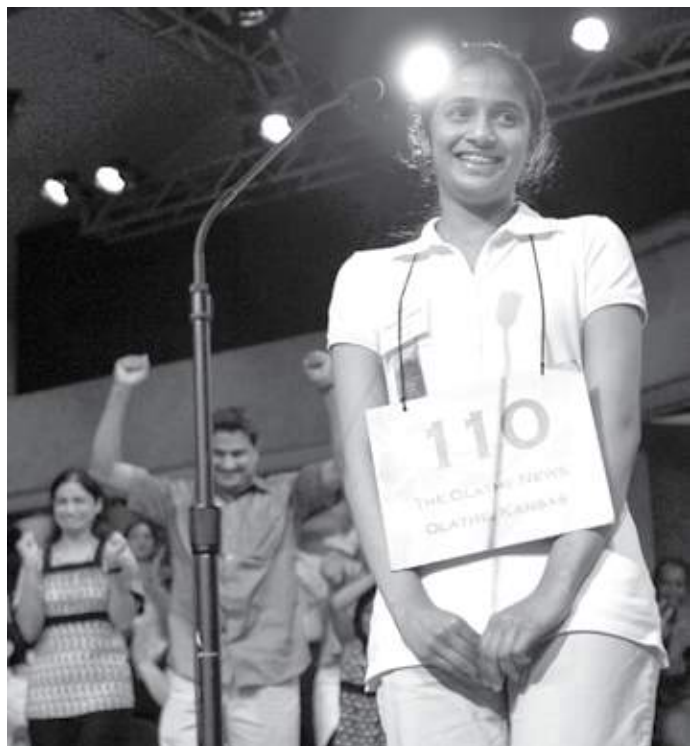
Second place went to 12-year-old Tim Ruiter of Centreville, Va., the only non-teenager in the finals. He misspelled "Maecenas," which means a cultural benefactor.

"I had absolutely no clue about that word," Tim said. "I was just racking my brain for anything possible that could help me. I'll probably be spelling it in my sleep tonight."

Aishwarya Pastapur, 13, from Springfield, Ill., who loved to pump her arm and exclaim "Yes!" after getting a word correct, finished third after flubbing "menhir", a type of monolith.

The 82nd annual bee attracted a record 293 participants, with the champion determined on network television in prime time for the fourth consecutive year. There was even a new humorous twist: Organizers turned the sentences read by pronouncer Jacques Bailly into jokes.

"While Lena's geusioleptic cooking wowed her boyfriend, what really melted his heart was that she won the National Spelling Bee," Bailly said while helping explain a word that describes flavorful food.



AP

Kavya Shivashankar, 13, of Olathe, Kansas, wins the finals of the Scripps National Spelling Bee, in Washington, on Thursday, May 28, 2009. In the background her parents, Sandy Shivashankar, left, and Mirle Shivashankar celebrate.

Then there was this gem, explaining a room in an ancient Greek bath: "It was always a challenge to tell whose toga was whose in the apodyterium."

But the laughter turned to shock when the speller, Sidharth Chand of Bloomfield Hills, Mich., flubbed the word, spelling it "apodeiterium." Sidharth was last year's runner-up and a favorite to take the title this year. He buried his head in his hands for about a minute after he took his seat next to his parents, while the audience and other spellers gave him a rare mid-round standing ovation.

This year's finalists were all 13 years old, except for 12-year-old Tim. Otherwise, they were a diverse group, with hometowns from New York to California. One was born in Malaysia. Another can speak Hindi and wore five good-luck charms. Tim is a science fiction buff who apparently does a great impersonation of Gollum from "Lord of the Rings."

Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, kicked off the championship rounds by telling of a bout with nerves that caused her to drop out of a sixth-grade spelling contest.

"I know that confidence is the most important thing you can give a child," she told the audience.

Susan Boyle loses her cool after being taunted

LONDON (AP)—A spokeswoman for Susan Boyle said Thursday that the Britain's Got Talent finalist lost her cool after being harassed by journalists at a London hotel. The spokeswoman said the golden-voiced and fluffy-haired singer, who became an overnight sensation after appearing on the show, was left distressed after being taunted by two reporters at the Wembley Plaza Hotel on Wednesday.

"Two journalists were harassing her and pushed her (Boyle) over the edge. She was left slightly distressed and the journalists were removed from the building by police," the spokeswoman said on condition of anonymity because she represents all of the contestants on the show.

The spokeswoman gave no further details of how Boyle was harassed or what she said.

AP

This is a May 24, 2009 file photo of Britain's Got Talent star Susan Boyle It's always a bad hair day for Susan Boyle until she starts to sing.

One of the show's judges, Piers Morgan, said Boyle was under a great deal of pressure.

"You could see the nerves almost crippling her on the semifinal show, and I just think it's time that everyone slightly backed off," he said in an interview on the LBC 97.3 radio station Thursday.

The spokeswoman was responding to questions about a Sun newspaper report Thursday.

The newspaper said she swore using four-letter words after two strangers set out to aggravate her and that police came up to ask her if there was a problem. It reported that Boyle stormed out of the hotel and spoke to police in the parking lot. It printed a photograph of her talking to a police officer.

The Scottish singer, who suffered learning difficulties as a child and was bullied by other children, is the overwhelming favorite in Saturday's Britain's Got Talent finals. The show is expected to draw millions of viewers in Britain, where it will be broadcast live.

Jay Leno gets set to leave the 'most wonderful job'

BURBANK, Calif. (AP)—It took a radio disc jockey to remind Jay Leno where he'll stand in "Tonight Show" history when he walks off the stage for the last time Friday.

Leno was at the wheel of one of his famous vintage cars when he heard the DJ conduct a pop quiz: Who's the second-longest-running host of "Tonight," after Johnny Carson?

Leno

"The guy on the radio actually got it before I did," Leno said Thursday, smiling. "It just sort of made me laugh. I went, 'Oh, that's pretty good.'"

Maybe even better than good?

"I come from 'pretty good,'" replied Leno, unfailingly modest in interviews. "If somebody wants to say even better, that's great."

He will have posted an impressive 17 years as "Tonight" host, but well short of Carson's three decades that ended with his retirement in May 1992. Leno debuted as "Tonight" host a few days later.

He leaves the show atop the late-night ratings, his run abbreviated by NBC's decision five years ago to create a succession plan that gives "Tonight" to Conan O'Brien.

On the eve of his final two shows, Leno strikes an unsentimental tone. But he knows what he's leaving behind as he moves to a new, untested 10 p.m. EDT daily prime-time show for NBC this fall.

"Will I miss it? Yes, terribly. It's the most wonderful job ever in show business," he said of "Tonight," which started in 1954 with Steve Allen as host.

Unlike the solitary road life of a typical standup comedian, telling jokes to an audience of maybe 100 or so, Leno said, he had the chance to make millions of viewers laugh—and then go home each night to his wife.

In a conference room at NBC's studio, a bulletin board typically filled with lists of guests and comedy bits for upcoming shows is nearly bare, down to the final two shows. "Prince," read one red card for Thursday, when the pop star was set to guest.

Prince's baby-blue Bentley was parked in the studio lot, near the backstage entrance and next to one of Leno's prized vehicles, an eye-catching red pickup truck.

Boyle Web sensation: A massive missed opportunity?

NEW YORK (AP)—The final act of the year's biggest pop culture sensation will not be seen on TVs, beamed out to multiplexes or heard much on the airwaves. Well, at least not in America.

The phenomenon of Susan Boyle, seen by millions of Britons on ITV's "Britain's Got Talent," has been a worldwide digital storm played out in sporadic installments on the Internet. Videos of her first performance in April—"I Dreamed a Dream" from the musical "Les Miserables"—have been watched more than 220 million times, according to Internet video research firm Visible Measures.

Boyle's semifinals performance over the weekend showed the craze is far from over. Her version of "Memory" from "Cats" has been the most popular YouTube video of the week in the U.S., the U.K., and just about everywhere else. Visible Measures counts its total views at 16.8 million—a pace nearly as rapid as that for "I Dreamed a Dream."

Though millions will tune in to the show in Britain, the much larger Boyle audience around the globe will witness the last act on YouTube or other video sharing platforms. The 47-year-old church volunteer from Blackburn, Scotland, will sing again Saturday (ready your mouse for clicking around 5:00 p.m. EDT), and whether she wins will be decided by viewer votes on Sunday (also around 5:00 p.m. EDT).

But depending on your perspective, Susan Boyle has been either a runaway hit or a boat missed: While Boyle mania has been a reflection of both the incredible growth of online video as a center of global culture, it's also endemic of media companies' struggle to fully leverage viral popularity.

Attorney: Rihanna will come to Chris Brown hearing

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Rihanna is among the witnesses whom prosecutors plan to call during a hearing in Chris Brown's assault case, an attorney said Thursday.

Donald Etra, Rihanna's lawyer, told reporters that prosecutors have told him the Barbados-born singer will receive a subpoena to testify at a preliminary hearing June 22. The hearing will focus on whether there is enough evidence to continue the case against Brown.

Etra said Rihanna will comply with the order. It would mark her first appearance in court since felony assault and criminal threats charges were filed against Brown in March.

If she is called to testify, the 21-year-old singer would be subject to cross-examination by Brown's attorney, Mark Geragos.

Other potential witnesses have not been named, but will likely include police investigators.

AP

In this Nov. 23, 2008 file photo, Rihanna arrives at the American Music Awards in Los Angeles.

Brown was arrested in February on suspicion of hitting and choking Rihanna in a rented car hours before the couple were scheduled to appear at the Grammys.

Etra wouldn't address their relationship now, but said Rihanna, whose real name is Robyn Rihanna Fenty, was following the case closely.

A judge on Thursday rejected a motion by Geragos to receive police and investigative records related to the case and the apparent leak of a photo of a beaten and bruised Rihanna.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Patricia Schnegg told Geragos the motion was premature and he could file it again after the preliminary hearing.

Brown wasn't in court Thursday, but he's required to attend the preliminary hearing. The 20-year-old R&B singer faces possible sentences that range from probation to nearly five years in prison if convicted.

Geragos argued that he should have access to the records to properly cross-examine police witnesses during the preliminary hearing. He also said intense public interest in the case should require the records' release.

Schnegg said Brown's fame wasn't an issue she was going to consider. She also called Geragos' motion "a fishing expedition."

She also said the records, which Geragos wants to use to search for police bias or misconduct, don't have anything to do with Brown's arrest. She said officers responded to a 911 call and the "Run It!" singer was arrested well before the photo of Rihanna's battered face was posted by celebrity gossip Web site TMZ.

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

'Idol' Allen duets with Huckabee

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"American Idol" winner Kris Allen is already thinking about getting into politics. The 23-year-old acoustic crooner from Conway, Arkansas, duets with Mike Huckabee (HUCK'-a-bee') during an appearance on the former Arkansas governor's Fox News Channel show scheduled to air Saturday. Huckabee, who ran unsuccessfully for the Republican presidential nomination last year, backs up Allen on bass for The Beatles' "Yesterday." During the appearance, Allen asks: "Maybe someday I could be the Governor of Arkansas, right?" Huckabee replies: "It's a great gig. It really is."

Akon speaks at upstate NY gun violence forum

POUGHKEEPSIE, N.Y. (AP)—Hip-hop star Akon spoke to students in upstate New York about gun violence as part of a plea agreement for tossing a fan off stage at a concert nearby. Akon pleaded guilty in December to tossing the teen off stage at a June 2007 concert at Dutchess County Stadium in Fishkill, N.Y. He won't serve jail time but must complete 65 hours of anti-violence and anti-gang community service. Poughkeepsie Mayor John Tkazyik said Thursday's forum fulfilled some of those hours. He said Akon will return to Poughkeepsie in September and participate in a Project SWAG—Society at War Against Guns—back-to-school conference. Akon, whose given name is Aliaune Thiam, will also record a public service announcement about gun violence for use by local radio stations.

Country singer John Rich charged with assault

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Country star John Rich is charged with assault and harassment in an ongoing dispute with a former "Nashville Star" contestant. Rich says in a statement Thursday that he turned himself in to Nashville police to face the charges filed by Jared Ashley, a contestant during the fourth season of the TV show on the USA network. The 35-year-old was charged with two misdemeanor counts of assault and one misdemeanor count of harassment. He was released on $3,000 bond. In April, Rich sued Ashley, saying the aspiring singer defamed him by claiming Rich hit him in the face. Rich says the charges are false and he rejected a settlement offer to pay $2.9 million to have them dropped. Rich is part of the duo Big & Rich. His latest solo hit is "Shuttin' Detroit Down."

Nolan Gerard Funk is set as B'way's Conrad Birdie

NEW YORK (AP)—The upcoming Broadway revival of "Bye Bye Birdie" has found its teen idol—Nickelodeon's young heartthrob Nolan Gerard Funk. Funk will portray rock 'n' roll superstar Conrad Birdie in the Roundabout Theatre Company production which opens Oct. 15 at Henry Miller's Theatre. Previews begin Sept. 10. The Vancouver-born performer starred in Nickelodeon's hit tween musical "Spectacular!" His other credits include the feature "X-Men 2," the miniseries "Taken" and the CW's "Smallville." "Bye Bye Birdie" concerns an Elvis Presley-like singer who is being drafted into the Army and the effect his departure has on the teenagers in a small Ohio town. John Stamos will play the star's manager, Albert Peterson, and Gina Gershon will portray the manager's long-suffering secretary.

Tom Sizemore arrested on drug warrant

Sizemore

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Tom Sizemore was arrested early Thursday in the Hollywood Hills on a warrant issued in a Central California drug case, authorities said.

The actor, who has co-starred in "Heat," "Saving Private Ryan" and "Black Hawk Down," was arrested with another man after officers came across them while responding to a unrelated call, Los Angeles Police Officer Norma Eisenman said.

Sizemore was arrested for an outstanding warrant issued in Bakersfield on a drug case from 2007.

Eisenman says another man who was with Sizemore was arrested on a drug possession charge, but that Sizemore was only booked on the warrant. Police did not name the man with Sizemore. Jail records show the 47-year-old actor has been released from custody.

Court records in Bakersfield show that a judge revoked Sizemore's probation in April at the request of probation officials. The record did not indicate a reason cited for the probation violation.

He was arrested in May 2007 in Bakersfield and charged with seven drug-related counts. He pleaded no contest to a charge of transporting drugs for personal use, and was sentenced to treatment in a drug therapy program and three years' probation.

Several of Sizemore's one-time managers and an attorney said they no longer represent him. The actor, whose movie credits also include "Natural Born Killers" and "Strange Days," recently appeared in an episode of the NBC series "Southland." His character is an outlandish actor who befriends a police officer and gets him into a compromising situation at a raucous party.

In real life, Sizemore has had numerous legal issues in recent years. He was convicted in 2003 of domestic violence involving his ex-girlfriend, former "Hollywood Madam" Heidi Fleiss. A year later he was convicted of methamphetamine possession, and has had a string of arrests since then.

Lohan's dad accused of threatening his girlfriend

CENTRALISLIP, N.Y. (AP)—Lindsay Lohan's troubled father has been charged with making a threatening phone call to his girlfriend.

The Suffolk County district attorney's office on Long Island says Michael Lohan surrendered last month on a charge of aggravated harassment.

Prosecutors say he threatened to kill himself and 34-year-old Erin Muller if she left him.

Lohan's attorney, Anthony Grandinette (gran-din-eh-TEE'), says his client is confident he will be exonerated.

Michael Lohan was released from prison in 2007 after serving nearly two years for attempted assault and driving while intoxicated.

Lindsay Lohan reportedly has no contact with her father, who is due back in court next month.

Sister can't shoulder burden of caring for younger brother

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I have just found out that my younger brother has been placed in foster care because he was abused in my mother's home. My family and I have been discussing who will take care of him, and everyone is saying it should be me because I am the only one of my siblings who has a job and my own apartment. I love my little brother with all my heart, but I don't feel all the responsibility should be placed on my shoulders.

I live in a two-bedroom apartment with my two children. My son is disabled. Yes, I do have a job, but I earn a low hourly wage and I'm on a tight budget. I am also concerned that my brother will need counseling to help him get over what he has been through.

When I explain my concerns to my family, they get angry and say I'm being selfish, and to be honest, I am feeling very guilty. Please help me because I have no idea what to do.

CRYING AT NIGHT IN MILWAUKEE

DEAR CRYING: Dry those tears and do not allow yourself to be manipulated into something you can't handle. As a single mother, you already have your hands full caring for two children —one of whom has special needs.

Your family is wrong to expect you to shoulder this additional challenge alone. Because none of them is offering to help you, and your brother was abused in the care of the family, accept that he may be better off in a supportive foster-care environment.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: When my husband and I moved into our new home, one of the neighbor kids, "Rachael" (age 9), took a liking to me. She came over with her mom, introduced herself and asked for my phone number. I thought nothing of it. But as time has passed, she has been calling more and more to invite me over. Abby, I'm almost 30!

It has reached the point where we no longer answer our phone. Rachael also shows up at our door with her friends and wants to "hang out." Sometimes she just stands there and doesn't say anything. It's awkward because I have never been wild about kids.

The girl is also constantly in our yard, playing with our dog (even though she has pets of her own), using our outdoor furniture, etc. I thought her mom would discourage it—but one day she actually left Rachael with me when she went out on a Saturday night.

Rachael has a response to all my excuses about why I can't see her. When I get home from work, she and several other young kids are playing in my driveway as I pull in. I have told her no one is allowed in our yard without our permission.

We are a young, happy couple with a lot of work to do on our house. We have a large yard to maintain and, frankly, I don't want to be the neighborhood baby sitter. How can I get this point across?

STUCK IN SAN DIEGO

DEAR STUCK: You are addressing your comments to the wrong person. You should take this up with Rachael's mother. You do not have to make "excuses." There are valid reasons Rachael and her friends should not be on your property unless they are supervised. If she or one of the others should somehow injure themselves, you could be held legally responsible. If there are no restrictions on fences in your neighborhood, consider fencing your yard.

■■■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

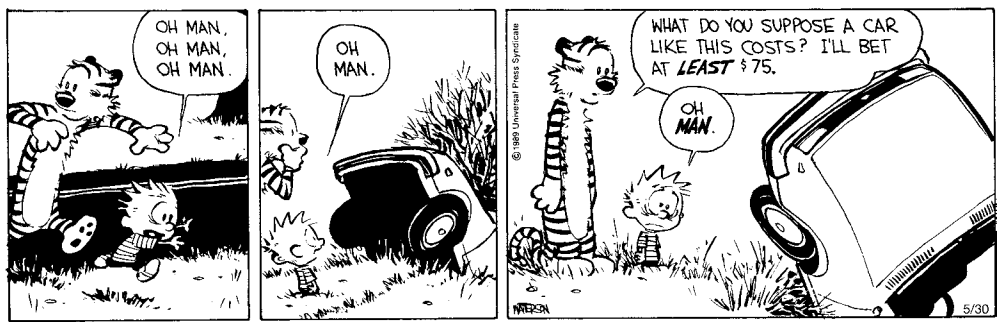
■■■

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $12 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


OH MAN, OH MAN, OH MAN.
OH MAN.
WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE A CAR LIKE THIS COSTS? I'LL BET AT LEAST $75.
OH MAN.
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WATTERSON
5/30

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

HOLA, AMIGO!
HOLA
© 2009 PAWS, INC. All Rights Reserved.
www.garfield.com
CARE TO EXPLAIN YOURSELF?!
LET'S JUST SAY HE MAKES A CHEESE QUESADILLA TO DIE FOR
JIM DAVIS 5-30
Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

OKAY, DAD. WE ACCEPT YOUR OFFER TO NOT LOWER OUR ALLOWANCE.
NOW LET'S HAVE SOME CHOCOLATE MILK TO CELEBRATE.
OH, WE CAN'T AFFORD CHOCOLATE MILK ANYMORE.
YOUR ALLOWANCES HAVE DRAINED US.
NO CHOCOLATE MILK?
DOES THIS ECONOMY SPARE NO ONE?!
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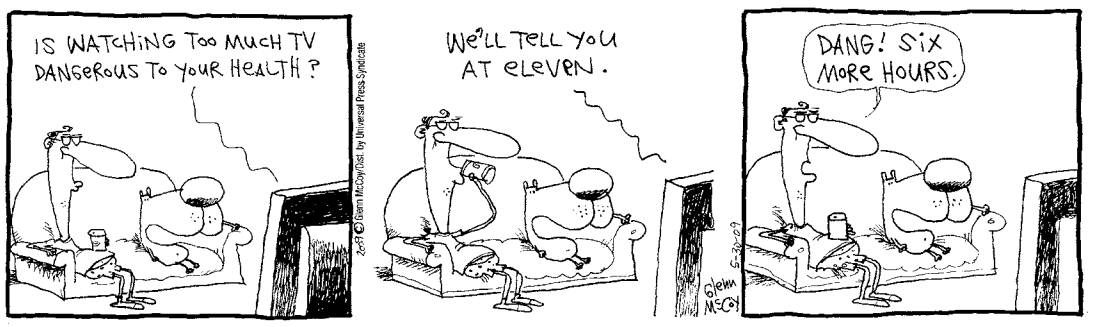
www.gocomics.com
5-30
MABBETT

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


IS WATCHING TOO MUCH TV DANGEROUS TO YOUR HEALTH?
2-5 © Glenn McCoy/Dist. by Universal Press Syndicate
WE'LL TELL YOU AT ELEVEN.
DANG! SIX MORE HOURS.
Glenn McCoy 5-30-09

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Pent up
6 Rook
12 Reproductive cell
13 Put on a pedestal
14 Gladiatorial venues
15 Zip-out portion
16 Diner's card
17 Mah-jongg piece
19 Had something
20 Whirl
22 Samovar
24 Pair from Connecticut?
27 Rearranged wd.
29 Fairy tale beast
32 Noted horn-blower
35 Glitch
36 Celebrate gustatorily
37 Listending abbr.
38 Unruly group
40 Without ice
42 TV alien
44 "I Love You, Man" star
46 Mined-over matter?
50 Feast for the eyes
52 Hardly plain
54 Mistaken
55 From what place
56 Tranquil
57 Homeward, to Santa

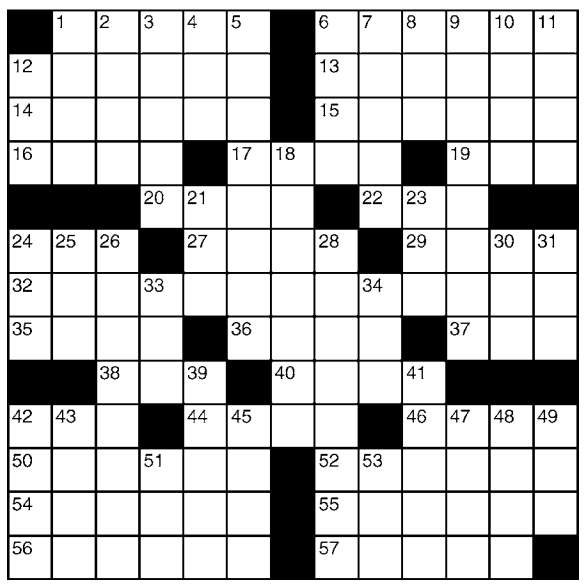
DOWN

1 Give a darn
2 Congregation's cry
3 Category
4 Schedule abbr.
5 Fated
6 Poker tactic
7 Farewell
8 Family member
9 Percussion instrument
10 Fast time?
11 Periphery
12 Whale group
18 Trapped
21 Crony
23 Filch from
24 Sprite
25 Zero
26 Connecticut city
28 Sunk
30 Same old thing
31 Common Mkt.
33 Teeter-totter quorum
34 Verily
39 Sportscaster Musburger
41 Photocopier need
42 Hearty quaffs
43 Traditional tales
45 Incite
47 Carry on
48 Leave a good impression?
49 Bishopric
51 Asian automaker
53 Pi follower

Solution time: 27 mins.

A	S	H	■	C	O	R	K	■	S	T	A	Y
I	W	O	■	O	B	O	E	■	L	O	S	E
R	A	P	S	H	E	E	T	■	O	O	P	S
S	M	I	T	E	S	■	T	W	O	■	■	■
■	■	■	O	R	E	■	L	A	P	D	O	G
L	U	C	R	E	■	W	E	D	■	O	N	E
A	L	U	M	■	M	A	S	■	L	I	C	E
I	N	S	■	F	O	X	■	W	A	T	E	R
N	A	P	K	I	N	■	I	O	U	■	■	■
■	■	■	E	N	S	■	M	O	R	A	S	S
B	L	A	B	■	T	A	P	D	A	N	C	E
I	O	T	A	■	E	V	E	S	■	T	O	W
D	U	M	B	■	R	E	L	Y	■	I	T	S

Yesterday's answer 5-30



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Blake Bashoff, 28; Cee-Lo, 35; Wynonna Judd, 45; Michael J. Pollard, 70

Happy Birthday: Move forward with confidence. You will have to be a creative problem-solver and a good friend if you want to help the people you care about. Choose your path and follow it religiously, even if someone tries to lead you astray. Your composure and willpower will lead you to victory. Your numbers are 9, 13, 15, 23, 28, 36, 49

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Avoid getting off schedule because of someone who isn't working as hard as you are. It's your tenacity and endurance that separates you from the rest. Don't be shy—step into the limelight and enjoy the glory. ✪✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Avoid opposition by going about your business quietly. An emotional problem with someone you care for can be resolved if you are discreet. You can have a powerful influence on someone who looks up to you. Use your position wisely. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): An opportunity will crop up through someone you are close to. Do what you can to accommodate the interests you have as well as those of the people you live with. Someone is relying on you to stand up and speak the truth. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): You'll be convincing, persuasive and hard to resist. The more responsibilities you have, the harder you will try and the better you will do. Don't fear what others can't imagine doing. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Speak from the heart and refuse to let anyone take you for granted. Be honest about your feelings and what you are and aren't willing to do. It's up to you to set the standard. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Sort things out in your own head before talking things over with someone who may have a problem with your intentions, plans or ideas. You may want to backtrack in order to limit any risk that might be involved. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Be prepared to deal with someone who is not in your corner. You will only get one chance, so make your effort count. If you are confident, you will convince others to support your goals. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Take care of the tedious jobs that need attention and you will feel better and be more apt to follow through with big tasks. Don't give in to demands that help someone else get ahead. Instead, drive toward your own goals. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Don't give anyone the opportunity to push you into things you don't care to do. This is not the time to make adjustments to accommodate someone who won't return the favor. Travel plans may lead to detours that teach you to be patient. ✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Take measures and change the way you do things in order to live a healthier and more comfortable, stress-free life. Rid yourself of any situation that is bringing you down or stifling you in any way. Don't give in to ultimatums. ✪✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): You can align yourself with someone who can contribute to your life if you are open and reveal your intentions. This is no time for secrets when honesty is the only way to find out where you stand. A partnership with someone can lead you in a new direction. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Don't get bogged down in messy details that really won't make a difference. Focus on health, your well-being and finding a less stressful way to live. Do your research or see a specialist to ease your mind. Being uninformed will create unnecessary pressure. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are inventive, imaginative and have a strong mind and a passionate drive. You are stubborn and determined.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

				6			9	
		7	3	1				6
	4					2		
	5		8					
2	9			5			4	3
					7		5	
		3					7	
1				3	4	8		
	8			9				

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 5/30

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

3	8	7	4	1	9	6	2	5
2	5	6	3	8	7	4	1	9
1	4	9	2	5	6	3	7	8
7	9	8	1	4	2	5	3	6
6	2	3	5	9	8	7	4	1
5	1	4	7	6	3	8	9	2
8	6	2	9	3	4	1	5	7
4	7	5	8	2	1	9	6	3
9	3	1	6	7	5	2	8	4

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 5/29

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

LET'S BE OPTIMISTIC **Solution: 6 letters**

R	B	H	B	A	L	A	N	C	E	M	(M)	N	L	L
Y	E	E	T	L	A	I	C	O	S	(L)	O	I	U	O
W	L	L	N	A	O	P	E	N	(A)	S	D	N	F	B
L	I	I	A	E	P	O	H	(C)	A	I	E	T	E	M
U	E	V	M	T	F	R	I	E	N	D	S	E	T	Y
F	V	E	A	A	I	I	R	P	E	E	T	R	A	S
K	E	S	I	L	F	O	T	T	C	A	I	N	R	E
N	I	T	I	U	U	R	N	S	N	S	N	A	G	L
A	H	G	T	T	E	E	N	S	A	C	Y	L	S	F
H	H	U	C	W	S	O	B	T	H	U	M	B	L	E
T	R	O	A	D	I	O	I	O	C	I	E	F	A	S
E	M	R	O	T	J	M	I	T	R	I	P	S	O	T
E	D	M	C	D	E	C	I	S	I	O	N	S	G	E
S	N	A	L	P	E	A	C	E	Y	G	R	E	N	E
E	V	L	O	S	L	U	F	G	N	I	N	A	E	M

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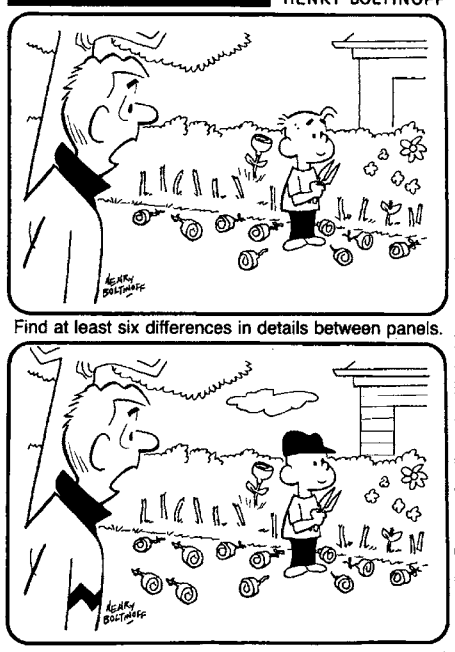
HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

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Differences: 1. Man's sweater is different. 2. Boy has hat. 3. Cloud has been added. 4. Additional flowers are on the ground. 5. House has siding. 6. Tree has a second branch.

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5	3	8	5	4	2	3	4	2	8	3	8	7
H	B	T	O	U	A	E	S	W	I	C	M	B
8	7	5	2	4	8	5	7	8	4	6	4	2
E	E	M	O	E	F	E	C	O	C	S	O	N
5	8	4	8	5	4	3	7	6	3	6	8	4
L	R	M	Y	I	M	H	O	T	O	A	O	O
6	4	6	5	7	6	5	2	8	4	6	2	3
N	N	D	F	U	A	E	D	U	S	R	E	O
7	8	5	2	8	3	4	6	8	5	6	2	8
R	R	A	R	S	S	E	D	E	L	S	F	L
2	3	5	6	4	6	8	4	5	2	5	4	7
U	Y	T	E	N	N	F	S	E	L	R	E	T
6	5	2	6	5	7	2	7	6	7	2	6	7
D	E	D	U	D	E	A	O	R	U	Y	E	S

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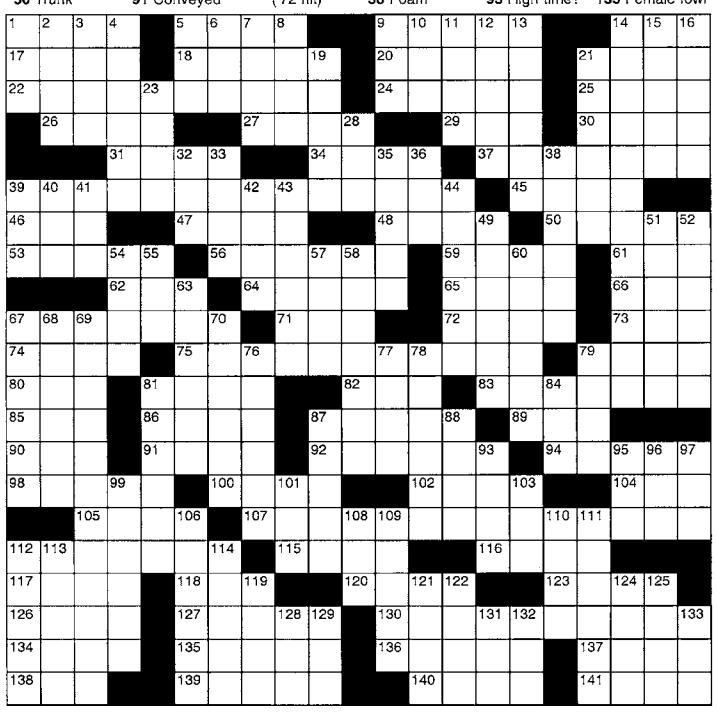
Super Crossword — PRESIDENTIAL TRIVIA

ACROSS

1 Ruth's husband
5 Approximately
9 Analyze a sentence
14 Postal abbr.
17 Tennis pro Nastase
18 Sri —
20 Humpback's home
21 Geometric figure
22 President who was a male model
24 Electrical inventor
25 Shortly
26 European capital
27 Part of Indonesia
29 Flat hat
30 It's good in a pinch
31 Adequate
34 "Picnic" playwright
37 '68 Tom Jones hit
39 President whose first language wasn't English
45 Alight
46 Out — limb
47 Debut recording
48 Shake — (hurry)
50 Trunk
53 Black and white delight
56 Petrarch product
59 Cleanse
61 Musical sensitivity
62 Inventor Whitney
64 Climb
65 Art deco designer
66 Writer Rand
67 Bug barriers
71 Vein contents
72 TV's "— Search"
73 Actress Scala
74 Couple
75 First president born in a hospital
79 Gasp
80 Business abbr.
81 Crooner Vallee
82 Adjust an ascot
83 Settle a score
85 Super Bowl sound
86 "Mila 18" author
87 Biblical city
89 Aachen article
90 Drillers' org.
91 Conveyed
92 Machine tool
94 Annual award
98 Coniferous tree
100 "Bhagavad —"
102 Aphrodite's son
104 Mellow
105 Comic Carey
107 President born on July 4th
112 Apple variety
115 Smile
116 "Entre —"
117 In the thick of
118 Insert dialogue
120 "Shane" star
123 Binchy's "— Road"
126 Prepare to fly
127 Sheer fear
130 President who was a fighter pilot
134 Jogger's gait
135 Rent
136 Tropical tree
137 Singer Brickell
138 Offense
139 A la King?
140 Soho streetcar
141 "— on Me" ('72 hit)

DOWN

1 Giant
2 Bread spread
3 Pretension
4 Fanatic
5 Word with hat or hand
6 Brit. filers
7 Social climber
8 Creole veggie
9 Ample abdomen
10 "Stroker —" ('83 film)
11 Take five
12 Tuna concoction
13 Pottery protection
14 President who worked as a lifeguard
15 "— Gay"
16 Fractional amount
19 Improvise
21 Vegas place
23 Valhalla villain
28 Shiba — (Japanese dog)
32 Link letters?
33 Monsieur Montand
35 Prepare the Parmesan
36 Sushi candidate
38 Foam
39 Lave the linoleum
40 Santa —, CA
41 Hightailed it
42 Grandpa McCoy
43 Sarge, e.g.
44 Most recent
49 Elastic band
51 Adage
52 Elaborate
54 Forest beauty
55 Kensington quaff
57 Not any
58 College member
60 Rubber-necked
63 Harm
67 Pasta shape
68 London's location
69 President portrayed in an opera
70 It's on the house
76 Occult
77 — -de-camp
78 Start again
79 Uruguayan currency
81 Running plays
84 Delivery truck
87 Trite
88 Artist Chagall
93 High time?
95 Spoiled
96 Quiche ingredient
97 Poe's "Annabel —"
99 Recognition
101 Zipper part
103 Jack of "Barney Miller"
106 Act like a duck
108 Kilmer or Bisoglio
109 Persona
110 Serenade accompaniment
111 Actress Sanford
112 The Rolling Stones' Charlie
113 Japanese porcelain
114 Blender setting
119 Grumpy guy
121 Obligation
122 "Stage —" ('37 film)
124 Impolite
125 Kuwait's continent
128 "— live and breathe!"
129 Singer Joey
131 Genetic letters
132 Room for improvement?
133 Female fowl



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Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

1. MEDICINE: Which vitamin is essential in blood clotting?
2. U.S. STATES: Which U.S. State has a license plate that proclaims, "Land of Lincoln"?
3. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: Which one of the seven dwarfs in the film "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" did not have a beard?
4. LITERATURE: Who wrote the novel "Interview With the Vampire"?
5. LANGUAGE: What were known as "liberty steaks" during World War I in America?
6. ANIMAL KINGDOM: How many arms does a squid have?
7. HISTORY: Who tried to assassinate George Wallace while he was campaigning for president in 1972?
8. GAMES: What is also known as skeet?
9. MOVIES: How many roles did Peter Sellers play in the movie "Dr. Strangelove"?
10. MEASUREMENTS: How many tablespoons are in one-fourth cup?

Answers

1. Vitamin K
2. Illinois
3. Dopey
4. Anne Rice
5. Hamburgers
6. 10
7. Arthur Bremer
8. Trapshooting
9. Three
10. Four

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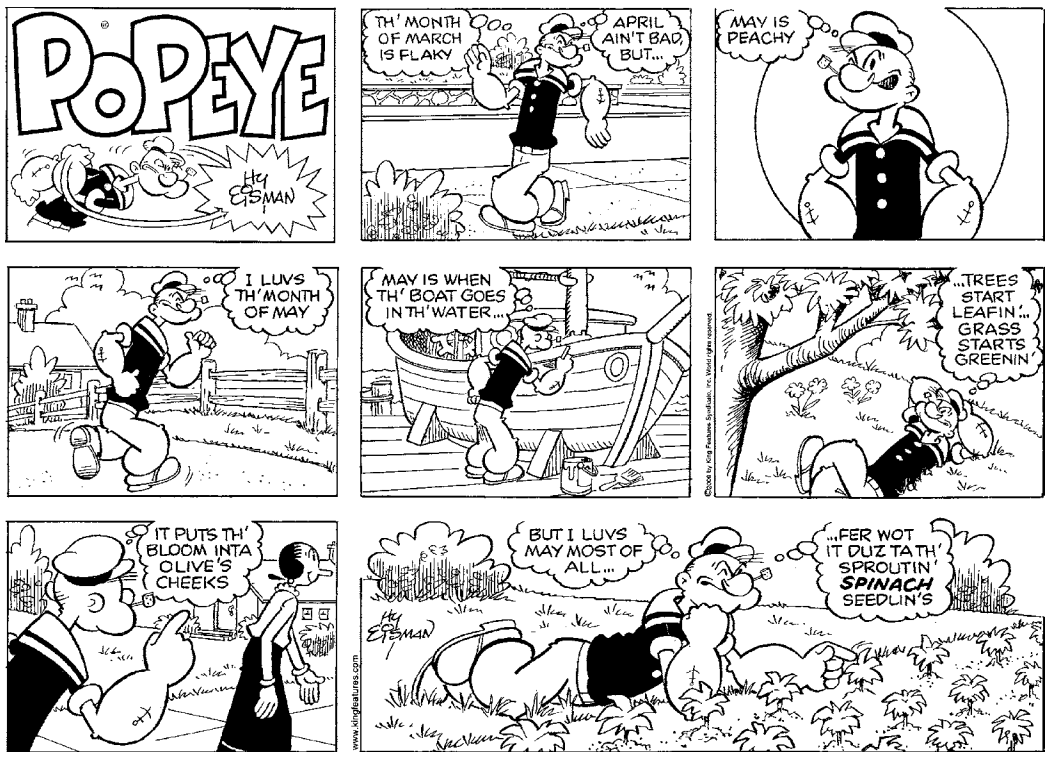
Saturday's Answers


POPEYE
HEY EISMAN
TH' MONTH OF MARCH IS FLAKY
APRIL AIN'T BAD, BUT...
MAY IS PEACHY
I LUVS TH' MONTH OF MAY
MAY IS WHEN TH' BOAT GOES IN TH' WATER...
...TREES START LEAFIN'... GRASS STARTS GREENIN
IT PUTS TH' BLOOM INTA OLIVE'S CHEEKS
BUT I LUVS MAY MOST OF ALL...
...FER WOT IT DUZ TA TH' SPROUTIN' SPINACH SEEDLIN'S
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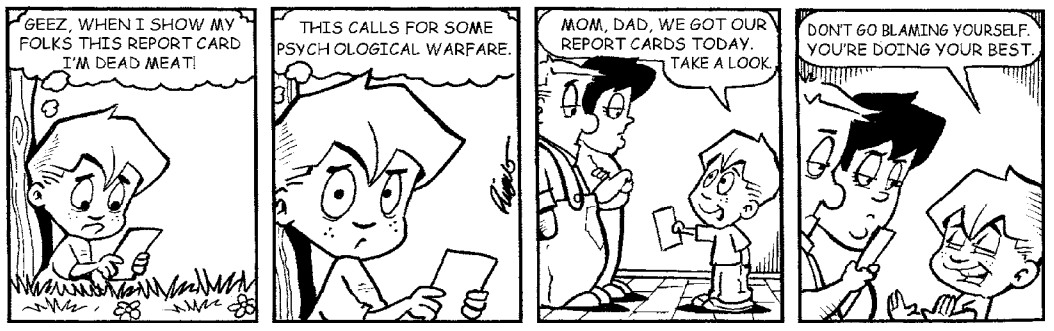
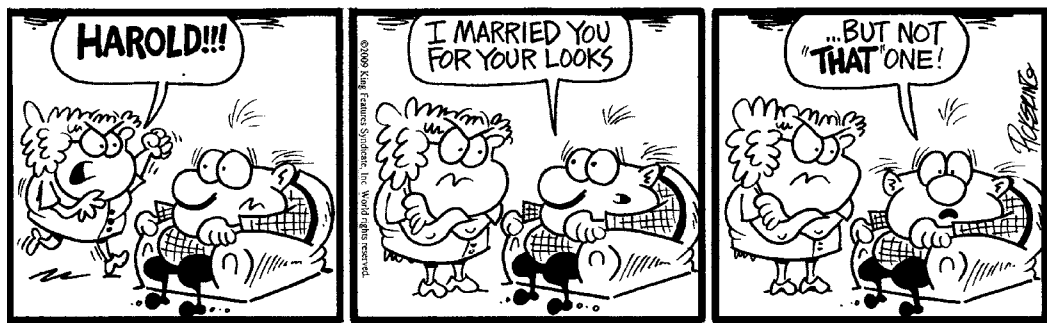
Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps

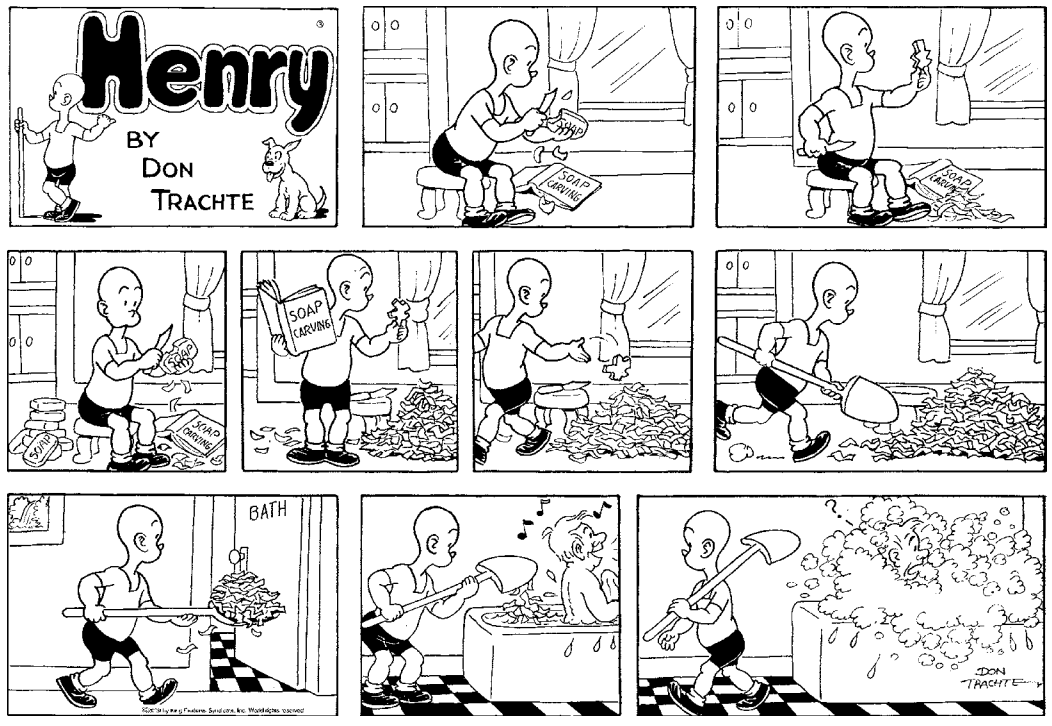

GEEZ, WHEN I SHOW MY FOLKS THIS REPORT CARD I'M DEAD MEAT!
THIS CALLS FOR SOME PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE.
MOM, DAD, WE GOT OUR REPORT CARDS TODAY. TAKE A LOOK.
DON'T GO BLAMING YOURSELF. YOU'RE DOING YOUR BEST.

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



MARK TRAIL
AMERICAN, OR NEW WORLD, VULTURES SHARE A COMMON ANCESTOR WITH STORKS AND IBISES...EUROPEAN, AFRICAN AND ASIAN VULTURES ARE RECOGNIZED AS OLD WORLD VULTURES
THERE ARE 7 SPECIES OF NEW WORLD VULTURES, AND 15 SPECIES OF OLD WORLD VULTURES
VULTURES ARE CONSIDERED THE MOST IMPORTANT AVIAN SCAVENGERS IN THE WORLD, AND IN SOME PARTS OF THE HOT MEDITERRANEAN NO ATTEMPT IS MADE TO BURY OR REMOVE DEAD LIVESTOCK...
CIRCLING ON HIGH, EACH BIRD STATIONS ITSELF SOME DISTANCE FROM OTHERS OF ITS KIND
WITH TELESCOPIC EYESIGHT, IT SCANS THE GROUND BELOW FOR FOOD, BUT IT ALSO WATCHES ITS SOARING NEIGHBORS EVEN MORE CLOSELY...
AND THE MOMENT ONE OF THEM CIRCLES DOWNWARD, ALL THE OTHER VULTURES FOLLOW FROM MILES AROUND TO SHARE IN ANY POSSIBLE FEAST
FOR IN A SHORT TIME THESE GREAT BIRDS WILL SWOOP DOWN AND DO THE JOB THOROUGHLY
JACK FLROD



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WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

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James scores 37 as Cavaliers stay alive

CLEVELAND (AP)—LeBron James made a new guarantee: Game 6.

With Cleveland's wondrous season on the line, James had 37 points, 14 rebounds and 12 assists, and Mo Williams, who boldly predicted his team would come back and win this tight-as-can-be series, added 24 points in the Cavaliers' 112-102 victory over the Orlando Magic in Game 5 on Thursday night.

It's back to Florida for Game 6 on Saturday night at amped-up Amway Arena.

You expected anything else?

"I mean this was a big game for us," James said. "You never want to disappoint the home crowd by not coming out and play as hard as you can. It was win or go home."

The Magic overcame a 22-point deficit but missed their first opportunity to close out the Cavaliers, who are trying to become just the ninth team since 1947 to rally and win a series after being down 3-1. Orlando will have two more tries to reach the NBA finals for the first time since 1995.

For Cleveland, a city banking on James to deliver a championship after a 45-year drought, the MVP was again in a league of his own.

James scored 21 points in the second half - 17 in the fourth quarter—and had a hand in 29 of Cleveland's 34 points in the final 12 minutes.

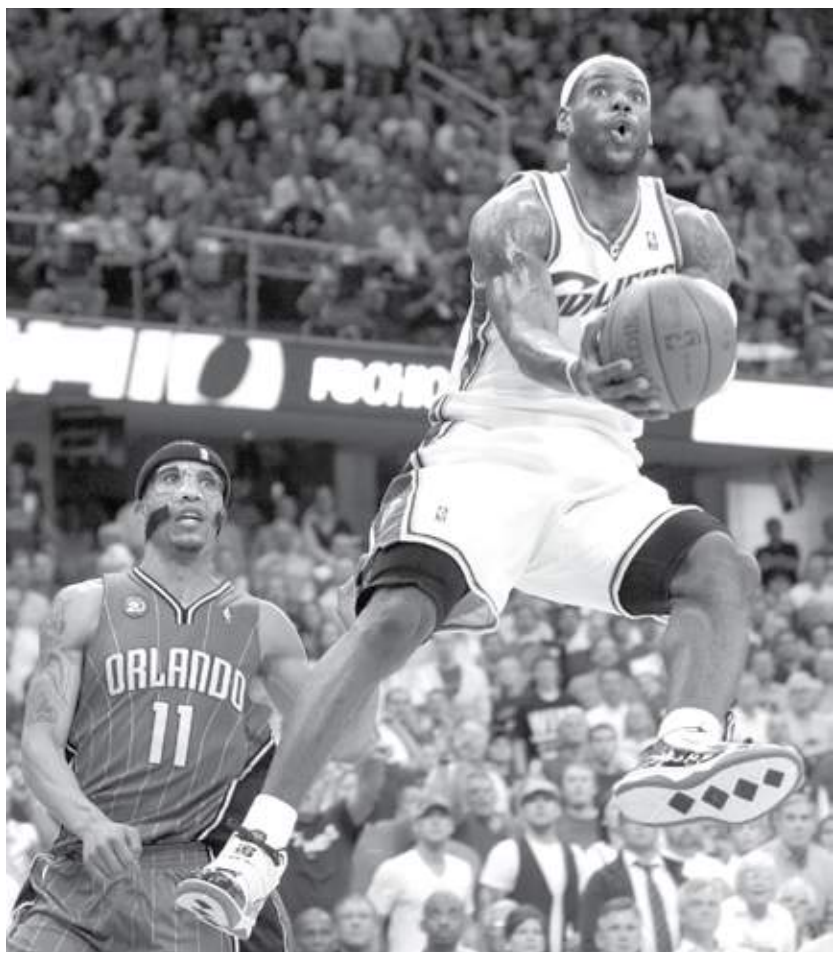
Hedo Turkoglu scored 29 for Orlando, and Dwight Howard had 24 points and 10 rebounds before fouling out with 2:22 remaining when he was called for his sixth personal foul while trying to stop James on a drive.

Not even Superman was denying James.

And this time, Williams, his trusty sidekick all season, showed up to help him, as did Zydrunas Ilgauskas (16 points), Delonte West (13) and reserve Daniel Gibson (11), who made two huge 3-pointers in the fourth.

"We'll be back here for Game 7," Gibson told the crowd afterward.

The Magic have twice ended series on the road this postseason, winning a Game 6 in Philadelphia and a Game 7 in Boston to make the conference finals. For a while it looked like Orlando might do it again, taking a 79-78 lead into the fourth quarter.



AP

Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James gets inside Orlando Magic's Courtney Lee (11) for a shot in the third quarter of Game 5 of the NBA Eastern Conference basketball finals Thursday, May 28, 2009, in Cleveland.

James, though, had other plans.

He picked up his first assist of the period on 3-pointer by Williams and his second on a 3 by Gibson. Cleveland then turned to its superstar every time down on offense, spreading the floor and forcing the Magic to defend him. If he wasn't backing down the lane, he was getting to the line or setting his teammates up from the perimeter.

He also had four rebounds and four assists in the final quarter.

"The game is basically all LeBron, all the time," said Orlando coach Stan Van Gundy, who was called for a technical in the second quarter. "If he gets in the paint, it's automatically a foul. One of the things we have to do, we can't keep putting him on the line 20 times a game. We have to find a way to stop that."

Down 32-10 with 3:40 left in the first quarter, the Magic started knocking down 3s and outscored the Cavs 45-24 the remainder of the first half.

The Magic, who made just eight 3s after hitting 17 in Game 4, then opened the third with nine straight points as Turkoglu hit a 3-pointer—of course—and Orlando was within 94-93 after Turkoglu made three free throws with 4:46 left. James then whipped a pass to Gibson for a 3 to make it 97-93.

Orlando missed on its next trip and James dropped a jumper. Mickael Pietrus missed the next time down and James was able to foul out Howard, who smiled as he headed to the bench knowing he and his teammates are still in control of the series.

Williams, who came in shooting just 32 percent from the floor and 22 percent on 3-pointers, set the tone early. It didn't last.

He made three 3s in the first 4:38, and the Cavaliers, playing perhaps their best quarter of the entire playoffs, started 10-of-11 from the field while opening a 22-point lead.

But the never-say-die Magic made it go poof!

Karl won't rein in his Nuggets now

DENVER (AP)—To make the NBA Finals for the first time—and bring their tattoos, athleticism and exuberance to the biggest stage of all—the upstart Denver Nuggets must win two games in a 48-hour span against a savvy Los Angeles Lakers team that is shooting for its 30th Finals appearance.

Oh, and L.A. hasn't lost back-to-back games since March.

The Nuggets might very well be the better team in the Western Conference finals, with a deeper bench, more muscle and better health than the tired, injured and often disjointed Lakers. But they also tend to implode at the worst times.

There's the taunting after big shots, the complaining after calls and the botched inbounds passes that cost them Games 1 and 3 and a chance at brooming the Lakers right out of the playoffs.

Now, they're one loss away from summer vacation.

"For most of the series, we outplayed them for most stretches of the game," Chauncey Billups(notes) said. "We just couldn't get over the hump in the fourth quarter in a few different situations."

Nor can they get out of their own way at times.

Denver has committed 11 technical fouls in this series and defensive stud Dahntay Jones(notes) is one more flagrant-1 foul away from a suspension.

Coach George Karl said he won't rein in his players for Game 6 in Friday night in Denver, however.

"You guys are almost saying you've got to have savvy and poise to be a championship team," Karl told reporters Thursday. "I mean, you think the Detroit Pistons have the poise that the San Antonio Spurs have? No, I mean there's a different way of handling emotional, passionate, intense players. We have some guys who are emotional. Maybe a little too emotional. But for me, I'm not going to tell them to stop that because I think that stops them from becoming a competitor.

"Right now, we're competing on the best stage on a pretty good level. I think the Lakers know we're there."

The Lakers have plenty of their own problems, inconsistency among them, but in Game 5, they showed they're not always so soft in the middle and they don't have to be a one-man band, either.

The Lakers finally discovered ways to get more balanced play, especially from their bigs.

"That's what the conversation has been about this entire postseason, our team, our potential and our capabilities," Derek Fisher(notes) said. "But how do we, as a group, open that space to be what we can be? … It's possible something clicked for us as a group last night against this team.

"We may have found some things we can do that allows us to attack them from everywhere. We feel we can't be beat when everybody's getting a chance to play."

Kobe Bryant(notes) lured double coverage then passed to his teammates with Lamar Odom(notes) and Pau Gasol(notes) doing the damage inside in the fourth quarter as the Lakers capped a 23-5 run and cruised to a 103-94 win Wednesday night.

"We've had stretches where we've played excellent defense," Bryant said, "but the competition we're facing with this Denver Nuggets team is unlike anything we've ever seen. They have so many scorers, they have an inside presence. So … I'm very proud of how we performed in that stretch."

Federer struggles in second round at French Open

PARIS (AP)—Close doesn't count. Roger Federer knows that as well as anyone. Still, even Federer had to acknowledge he found himself in a much tighter and tougher match than he would have expected—or is used to—in the French Open's second round Thursday before producing a 7-6 (8), 5-7, 7-6 (2), 6-2 victory over Jose Acasuso of Argentina.

How near did the 45th-ranked Acasuso come to a startling upset—in straight sets, no less? On four occasions, the Argentine was a point from taking the first set. After winning the second, he held a set point in the third.

Federer, whose season hasn't been up to his high standards, was up to the task each time, though.

"Mentally, I've always been very strong, but I'm not being put in a position like this very often, you know," Federer said. Then, moments later, as if to make sure everyone understood him, Federer added: "Coming through such a match is always a great feeling. Like I said, I'm not part of such close matches that often."

Particularly at this stage of a Grand Slam tournament. And particularly against anyone other than Rafael Nadal, who supplanted Federer at No. 1 in the rankings last year and edged him in five-set Wimbledon and Australian Open finals.

"I thought," Acasuso said, "I could have won this match."

But this has not been a French Open for underdogs or upsets, and no seeded men lost Thursday, when the winners included No. 5 Juan Martin del Potro, No. 6 Andy Roddick, No. 9 Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, No. 10 Nikolay Davydenko, No. 11 Gael Monfils and No. 16 Tommy Robredo.

Four seeded women went home, though none higher than No. 13 Marion Bartoli. Those moving into the third round included both Williams sisters—Venus needed three sets, Serena two—No. 5 Jelena Jankovic, No. 7 Svetlana Kuznetsova and No. 4 Elena Dementieva, who advanced when Jelena Dokic stopped playing because of a bad back while leading 6-2, 3-4.

"I really don't deserve to win today because of the way I was playing," Dementieva said.

The biggest surprise Thursday might have been how well Roddick played, given that he hadn't made the third round at Roland Garros since his 2001 tournament debut.

"There's a lot of work to go," said Roddick, the only U.S. man remaining of the nine who entered the tournament. "By no means have I accomplished anything yet."

In his 6-2, 6-2, 7-6 (2) victory over 85th-ranked Ivo Minar of the Czech Republic, Roddick hit 15 aces, saved all four break points he faced and won the point on 23 of 26 trips to the net.

"I'm not going to sit here and jump up on a soap box like I'm really good on this stuff now because I won two matches. I think that's what you need to guard against," Roddick said. "Today I felt pretty good, and I felt pretty in control of what I was doing."

Federer, in contrast, offered this assessment of his performance: "I was not managing and controlling the match the way I should have."

He has made the semifinals at a record 19 consecutive majors and hasn't lost before the third round at any Grand Slam event since the 2003 French Open. But of Federer's 13 Grand Slam titles—one shy of Pete Sampras' career mark—zero have come at Roland Garros.

Federer reached the past three finals and the 2005 semifinals at the clay-court major before losing to Nadal each time.

No one over the last five years, apart from Nadal, had really made Federer seem ordinary at the French Open until Acasuso did for stretches. That he would give Federer a hard time is especially noteworthy: Acasuso advanced past the second round only once in 28 career Grand Slam tournaments.

Yet there he was, taking a 6-3 lead in the first-set tiebreaker. Federer erased the first two set points with aces before Acasuso pulled a forehand wide. Then, ahead 7-6, Acasuso shanked a shot to waste No. 4, and Federer eventually claimed that set.

As Federer's pregnant wife, Mirka, munched on a baguette sandwich in the stands, Acasuso took control in the second set by breaking for a 6-5 lead. It was part of a seven-game run that also gave Acasuso a 3-0 lead in the third, and at the ensuing changeover, Federer sat down and bowed his head.

Soon enough it was 5-1 for Acasuso, who served for the third set at 5-2. He held a set point at 40-30, but Federer erased it with a big forehand, and suddenly the favorite was gaining momentum and finding his stride.

"I still feel I have plenty of ways to try and beat a player," Federer said.

Only three of his 45 unforced errors came in the fourth set, and Federer served out the final game at love, with a forehand winner, a 118 mph service winner, a 105 mph ace, and a 118 mph ace.

"Federer is a really tough guy, a strong player. You have to be 100 present," Acasuso said. "He's not going to give you free points."

Varitek hits 2 HRs, ejected as BoSox win

AP

Boston Red Sox manager Terry Francona, center, protests the ejection of catcher Jason Varitek, right, by plate umpire Todd Tichenor, left, who ejected Varitek for arguing a call in the seventh inning of a baseball game Thursday, May 28, 2009, in Minneapolis. Francona was ejected moments later.

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Getaway day started a little bit early for the Boston Red Sox and Minnesota Twins.

Jason Varitek hit two home runs, then was one of four people ejected by young umpire Todd Tichenor during separate arguments in the seventh inning of Boston's 3-1 victory over Minnesota on Thursday.

The 32-year-old Tichenor, up from the Triple-A Pacific Coast League, gave the boot to both catchers and both managers during a wild seventh inning that ended with Red Sox starter Josh Beckett giving a dismissive wave toward home plate in disgust.

"Everybody handles things differently," Red Sox manager Terry Francona said of Tichenor. "It looked like he had his hands full today. Their guys were getting ejected, we're getting (ejected). That's probably not your goal of the game."

Joe Crede hit a home run in his return from a three-game absence because of a bruised hand, but Beckett was too much for the Twins. He allowed one run on three hits with four walks and eight strikeouts in seven innings.

Jacoby Ellsbury went 0-for-3 to snap a 22-game hitting streak. But Varitek hit solo homers off Anthony Swarzak (1-1) to lead off the fifth and seventh innings, the first first time the switch-hitter has hit two home runs in a game off right-handed pitchers since 2004, according to baseballreference.com.

The razzing really started after his second homer.

Dustin Pedroia lifted a sacrifice fly to right field and Jason Kubel fired a perfect strike to Mike Redmond(notes) at home plate as Jeff Bailey came barreling home. Redmond applied a sweep tag and replays showed that he appeared to hit Bailey on the arm just before Bailey's hand touched the plate.

But Tichenor called Bailey safe, prompting an animated protest from Redmond. Tichenor tossed Redmond almost immediately after the catcher approached him..

Indians 2, Rays 1

At Tampa Bay, Rookie David Huff and four relievers combined to stifle the Tampa Bay Rays and Victor Martinez drove in both runs for the Indians, who completed a four-game sweep of the defending American League champions.

It's the first four-game sweep for the Indians since they did it to the Rays last July 10-13 at Progressive Field. The Rays have lost 17 in a row in Cleveland and five in a row overall.

The Rays' run came on Willy Aybar's homer in the sixth, which was upheld after using video replay.

Orioles 5, Tigers 1

At Baltimore, Luke Scott homered twice and had four RBIs, David Hernandez pitched into the sixth inning to win his major league debut, and the Orioles beat Detroit for their season-high fourth straight victory.

Nolan Reimold also homered for the Orioles. The rookie has connected in three straight games and has five in 14 games since he was recalled from Triple-A Norfolk on May 14.

Hernandez (1-0) allowed one run, five hits and four walks in 5 2-3 innings. Recalled from Norfolk before the game, the right-hander became the fourth Orioles pitcher this season to win his first start—joining Koji Uehara, Brad Bergesen and Jason Berken.

Diamondbacks 5, Braves 2

At Phoenix, Dan Haren outpitched Derek Lowe and the Arizona Diamondbacks took advantage of second baseman Kelly Johnson's error to score four times in the fourth inning on their way to a 5-2 victory over the Atlanta Braves on Thursday night.

Haren retired 15 in a row before a two-out double by Johnson and RBI single by Casey Kotchman in the eighth inning. The right-hander allowed two runs and seven hits in eight innings, striking out eight to earn his first victory in four starts.

Haren has not walked a batter in his last three outings. He's walked nine all season, with 71 strikeouts.

Dodgers 2, Cubs 1

At Chicago, Joe Torre stuck with Ramon Troncoso and the Dodgers reliever rewarded his manager for the vote of confidence.

Troncoso wriggled out of a bases-loaded jam in the ninth after Randy Wolf pitched impressively into the eighth inning, helping Los Angeles beat the Chicago Cubs 2-1 on Thursday night for its fourth straight victory.

Juan Pierre had two hits and scored a run for the Dodgers, who have the best record in baseball at 34-15.

The Cubs have lost nine of 11, and learned earlier in the day their ace Carlos Zambrano was suspended six games for his tirade during Wednesday's victory over the Pittsburgh Pirates. Zambrano said he won't appeal the penalty, which included a fine. Barring rainouts, he is eligible to return next Thursday.

Zambrano won't appeal 6-game suspension

CHICAGO (AP)—Cubs ace Carlos Zambrano was suspended for six games by Major League Baseball on Thursday, a day after his tirade during a game against the Pittsburgh Pirates.

Zambrano said he won't appeal the penalty, which included a fine. Barring rainouts, he is eligible to return next Thursday and start that night at Atlanta.

"Well, you know, I think I'm a pretty good judge of when you make a mistake, when you do something wrong, you have to pay for it," Zambrano said. "I don't have a problem with that. I know that I did something that disrespected MLB. I apologize like I did yesterday, and let's move on. I accept the suspension."

Chicago manager Lou Piniella said the penalty was reasonable.

"I think the ruling was fair," Piniella said. "I think Carlos does, also. He just took it too far. I think he realizes that. We had a nice talked in my office with Carlos and (pitching coach) Larry Rothschild and told him basically we weren't happy about the situation and we are not going to condone it, and that there is nothing wrong with being upset but you got to learn to walk away at the right time."

The loss of Zambrano will shorten Chicago's bench. Zambrano is hitting .261 with one home run.

"Not only does he miss his regular start, we use him to pinch-hit time to time, so it hurts us on two fronts," Piniella said.

Zambrano threw a baseball into left field and slammed his glove against the dugout fence after he was ejected Wednesday, moments after his wild pitch let the Pirates tie it at 2 in the seventh inning. The Cubs won 5-2.

With Nyjer Morgan at third, Zambrano's wild pitch just got away from catcher Geovany Soto. Zambrano covered the plate for Soto's throw, Morgan slid and umpire Mark Carlson ruled him safe.

The excitable Zambrano jumped up, argued and was ejected after he appeared to nudge Carlson. Zambrano then pointed in Carlson's face and gave him the ejection sign.

He then fired a ball into left, tossed his glove and took a bat to a dugout drink dispenser before heading to the clubhouse.

Bob Watson, baseball's vice president in charged is discipline, cited Zambrano for "inappropriate and violent actions on the field and in the dugout."

"Obviously his actions after he left the plate area were certainly warranting some kind of penalty," Cubs general manager Jim Hendry said. "I don't have a problem with the emotions showed at the plate and even if it leads to an ejection. Obviously you have to be able to control yourself better than he did after that."

It wasn't the first time that Zambrano had a public meltdown. In 2007, he got into a fight with former teammate Michael Barrett in the dugout. The fight then resumed in the clubhouse.

Zambrano got agitated with a reporter when the incident was brought up.

"How can you bring Michael Barrett into this conversation? Man, I'm a man, you know. If somebody comes to me and tries to beat me up, I have to respond, you know? Nobody likes to get beat up, you know? I don't say this to the umpire," he said.

"If some man here or some man outside is trying to get me up or trying to fire me up, I will respond. And anybody here, any man here will respond," he said. "Am I right? Nobody likes to be hit. Nobody likes to be fired up. Nobody. As a man you don't like to be pushed up or you don't like to be, you don't like somebody to kick your butt. You will respond as a man. So don't bring Michael Barrett in this conversation. We're talking about the incident yesterday, not Michael Barrett."

Rose may be at center of NCAA probe

MEMPHIS (AP)—Memphis athletic director R.C. Johnson defended the men's basketball program Thursday, saying the school checks out all potential players.

He would not confirm that Derrick Rose, who led Memphis to the 2008 national title game, is at the center of an NCAA investigation of major violations during that season.

In a letter to the school the NCAA says an unknown person took the SAT for a player, with his knowledge, and then the player used that test to get into Memphis. The NCAA said the athlete in question played for the Tigers in the 2007-08 season and the 2008 NCAA tournament. The only person who played just that season was Rose.

"We wouldn't play anybody if we hadn't checked it out pretty thoroughly," Johnson told The Associated Press.

Johnson would not identify the player involved for privacy reasons. But he said the player is cooperating with Memphis' investigation into the allegations.

"Nobody has thrown up any road blocks," Johnson said. "We're trying to get it resolved and do it the right way."

The NCAA has asked Memphis to provide copies of the SAT and a Sept. 2, 2008, report by a forensic document examiner who studied the handwriting in the SAT.

Rose's attorney, Daneil E. Reidy, said in a statement Thursday that the No. 1 pick in the 2008 NBA draft by Chicago and this season's rookie of the year was aware of the allegations.

"Mr. Rose cooperated fully with the University of Memphis' athletic and legal departments' investigation of this issue when he was a student and that investigation uncovered no wrong-doing on his part," Reidy said. "At this time, Mr. Rose sees no reason to engage in further discussion regarding this matter and will instead focus on his career as a professional basketball player.

"Neither Mr. Rose nor I will have further comment."

The Chicago Sun-Times reported Thursday that someone with access to Rose's academic records at Simeon High School changed a D to a C on his transcript. The newspaper reported that Rose was one of four athletes at the school whose grades were boosted for a one-month period after their June 2007 graduation and then changed back after the bogus transcripts were sent to colleges.

Memphis was notified Jan. 16 of the potentially major violations in the men's basketball program and will appear June 6 in Indianapolis before the NCAA committee on infractions for a hearing. Johnson declined to provide any details on what Memphis has found in its investigation prior to the hearing.

"We've been working on this for some time and continue to get our final presentation finalized and make sure we dotted all the Is and crossed all the Ts," Johnson said.

The alleged violations occurred under John Calipari, who left March 31 to take over at Kentucky. Calipari, who's cooperating with the investigation, was told by the NCAA in a letter that he was not at risk of being charged with any violations in the case.

Kentucky president Lee Todd reiterated in a statement Thursday that his university was aware of the inquiry while interviewing Calipari.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	28	20	.583	-
New York	27	20	.574	1/2
Toronto	27	23	.540	2
Tampa Bay	23	27	.460	6
Baltimore Orioles	22	26	.458	6

Central Division

Detroit	26	20	.565	-
Minnesota	24	25	.490	3 1/2
Kansas City	23	24	.489	3 1/2
Chicago	21	25	.457	5
Cleveland Indians	21	28	.429	6 1/2

West Division

Texas	27	19	.587	-
Los Angeles	24	22	.522	3
Seattle	22	26	.458	6
Oakland Athletics	18	26	.409	8

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

New York	26	20	.565	-
Philadelphia	25	20	.556	1/2
Atlanta	23	24	.489	3 1/2
Florida	22	26	.458	5
Washington	13	33	.283	13

Central Division

St. Louis	28	19	.596	-
Milwaukee	27	20	.574	1
Cincinnati	26	20	.565	1 1/2
Chicago	23	23	.500	4 1/2
Pittsburgh	21	26	.447	7
Houston	18	27	.400	9

West Division

Los Angeles	34	15	.694	-
San Diego	24	23	.511	9
San Francisco	23	23	.500	9 1/2
Arizona	21	27	.438	12 1/2
Colorado	18	28	.391	14 1/2

Yesterday's Games
Boston 3, Minnesota 1
Cleveland 2, Tampa Bay 1
Baltimore 5, Detroit 1
Arizona 5, Atlanta 2
LA Dodgers 2, Chi Cubs 1

By The Associated Press

LOCAL SCORES

BELAU MASTERS STANDINGS

Dolphins	6	0
Lancheros	5	2
Choll Aces	4	2
Salty Boys	3	3
Peleliu	2	4
Kagman Jack	1	5
Trubak	0	5

UFO LEAGUE STANDINGS

MDX	2	0
Bayani	1	0
SMF	1	0
SIP	0	1
VisMinda	0	1
Cabalen	0	2
NAMFREL	0	0
NMBA	0	0

All's OK for Roger in Top Pool Bar 8-ball

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Roger "The Ghost" Espiritu returned to his masterful ways by winning last Saturday's Top Pool Bar 8-Ball Billiards Tournament at the Garapan sports bar and watering hole.

The Pacific Oriental, Inc. employee swept through the first three rounds then beat Don Antonio in the semifinals to advance to the championship round with the all-important twice-to-beat advantage.

In a rematch with Antonio in the finals, Espiritu yielded the felt table early to his opponent only to watch Antonio squander his opportunities to pull off an upset.

Antonio actually started with two balls on the break and proceeded to pocket two balls before scratching on his next shot. Espiritu pocketed three balls but missed on his next shot, giving back control to Antonio.

Antonio sunk two more balls but missed anew on his next shot. Espiritu then cleaned his remaining two balls before delivering the coup de grace on the 8-ball to secure the win.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Last Saturday's Top Pool Bar 8-Ball Billiards Tournament champion Roger "The Ghost" Espiritu, left, poses with runner-up Don Antonio before their finals matchup last Saturday at the Garapan sports bar and watering hole.

Espiritu took home the $60 lion's share of the tournament's pot, while Antonio settled for the $20 runner-up purse.

The win capped a dominating performance by Espiritu all throughout the competition.

Espiritu started his evening with a win over Juancho Mendoza to join Antonio, Luis Fajardo, and Chester Cuento to the next round.

He then outplayed Cuento to forge a semifinal matchup with Antonio, who beat Fajardo in their own second round duel.

In the semis, Espiritu ran all seven balls but snookered himself on the 8-ball. Antonio then pocketed two balls but missed on his third shot giving Espiritu a chance for the 8-ball, which he capitalized on.

After a series of elimination matches, Cuento earned a shot of Antonio for the second finals berth.

Antonio started quickly but missed midway to finishing his assigned balls. Cuento fought back by running five balls but Lady Luck didn't smile his way, as he scratched on his next shot. With only three balls left and with ball in hand, Antonio ran his remaining two balls and the 8-ball to advance to the finals.

The Top Pool Bar 8-Ball Billiards Tournament is held every Saturday and adopts a double-elimination format with a maximum of 16 players.

The entrance fee is $10 and the tournament uses the rules of the Billiards Congress of America. Practice is free between 7pm to 8pm on game day.

For more information on the Top Pool Bar 8-Ball Billiards Tournament, call Top Pool Bar manager Zheng Jian Qing at 287-7676.

June 11 meeting for KOD qualifiers

Representatives of teams interested in joining the first qualifying round for the Saipan leg of the 2009 Budweiser King and Queen of the Diamonds Softball Tournament are asked to attend a meeting on June 11.

The meeting is set for 5:30pm at the Garapan Beach House, located behind McDonald's Garapan. Only the first 12 teams to register will be allowed to compete in the qualifiers.

The series of qualifying rounds for the Saipan leg of KOD will start next month at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

The first qualifying round is scheduled for June 13 and 14, while the next two are set for Aug.1 and 2, and Sept. 26 and 27. The fourth/consolation round will run on Oct. 3 and 4, while the Tournament of Champions-Saipan leg is set for Oct. 17 and 18.

Teams advancing to the Tournament of Champions must place first in one of the first three rounds. Squads aiming to qualify for the fourth/consolation round should compete in at least two of the first three rounds. Winner of the consolation round will then earn a slot to the Tournament of Champions-Saipan Leg and play three other teams.

Victor of the Saipan leg will represent the CNMI to the 2009 Budweiser King and Queen of the Diamonds Softball Tournament and will play teams from Guam, Palau, and Pohnpei. Saipan will host the four-island tournament from Nov. 12 to 15.

For more information, contact Liz Palacios at 287-8869. ***(Roselyn B. Monroyo)***

BAYANI

From Page 28

do's seven second-quarter points.

Sanciangco and Barbo, who were held to six and five points in the first half, respectively, took the cudgels for Bayani in the third, combining for 19 of the team's 29 points to retake the lead, 66-65.

VisMinda remained afloat in the third after getting contributions from seven players before things fell apart in the fourth, as it simply didn't have the legs to match up against Bayani's fast-paced game. It did not help VisMinda that Peredo sat out in the fourth quarter with an aching stomach after getting elbowed in a loose ball play in the third period.

In the first game, MDX-Chow Queen whipped Cabalen, 107-82, to improve to 2-0 record and take an early lead in the eight-team field.

Cabalen dropped to a 0-2 slate, but not after threatening the favored MDX in the second quarter.

After a jackrabbit start, MDX saw its 30-16 lead in the first quarter wiped out in the second canto. Jesse Mina capitalized on a sluggish MDX defense in the second period, nailing 15 points in that quarter and lifting Cabalen to a 47-46 halftime lead.

MDX returned to business in the second half, tallying 35 big points against Cabalen's 17 to break the game wide open, 81-64. Kae Bernardo and company finished the job in the fourth, outscoring Cabalen, anew, 25-18, to give MDX back-to-back wins.

Bernardo led all scorers with his 31 points, while Mina top-scored for Cabalen with 29 markers.

First Game

MDX 107 – Bernardo 31, Abuel 18, Capalad 15, Tamayo 14, Pantaleon 10, Demapan 8, Mortos 3, Galvez 2, Galulu 2, Siriban 2.

Cabalen 82 – Mina 29, Ortega 18, Basa 8, Tobias 7, Corotan 5, Samson 4, Guiang 4, Cadag 2, Paras 2, Asuncion 1, Tengco 1, Steward 1.

Scoring by quarters: 30-16, 46-47, 80-64, 107-81.

Second Game

Bayani 99 – Ryan Sanciangco 31, Barbo 19, Delos Reyes 15, Tabora 14, Vinas 6, Abuy 5, Ong 3, Camacho 2, Palma 2.

VisMinda 91 – Peredo 14, Barrios 14, Joyner 12, Montano 10, Cosino 9, Mateo 8, Mercurio 6, Bicera 6, Veloso 3, Dayrit 2, Artates 2, Hernandez 1.

Scoring by quarters: 18-16, 37-40, 66-65, 99-81.

VILLAFRIA

From Page 28

on Tinian this coming June 6.

Villafria said the triathlon will serve as a fitting workout for what he will be facing in the Mt. Fuji Marathon, which is composed of two legs, a 15-kilometer race to the fifth station of the mountain and a 21-km race all the way to the top.

Villafria was one of only 6,000 participants who have been pre-screened to take part in the 2009 edition of the Fuji Mountain Race.

The Filipino runner and Coco Restaurant employee also took the opportunity to thank companies and individuals that made Run 4 Ron II, held last May 24, a success.

He named Salon de Manila, DFS Galleria, Pacific Islands Club Saipan, Hard Rock Café Saipan, Micronesian Brokers, Inc., IT&E, Docomo Pacific, Tan Holdings, Fiesta Resort & Spa, NRG-Shot (Distributed by Car Corp), Triple J, and Bank Pacific as sponsors of the event.

Also helping out were LBT Appraisal, Auto Glass Pro, Fomacon Liner, GEC Pawnshop, Jazy Sportswear, Island Apparel, Coco Restaurant, Custom Construction, Bike Pro, MARPAC (Michellob), Traders Insurance, Saipan Shopping, Godfather's Bar, Sherwin Williams, 888 Handyman Services, Western Union, Marianas Visitors Authority, Steven Pixley, Susan Espanillo, Erwin Aquino, Bobby Mandapat, and John Ilao.

Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel and Mamiko Oshima-Berger, incidentally, won Run 4 Ron II after crossing the finish line in times of 18:54 and 20:34, respectively. The five-kilometer run was held at the American Memorial Park.

CUKI

From Page 28

Docomo Pacific, Miller Lite, Budget Rent A Car, Aquarius Beach Tower, Chalan Kanoa Beach Hotel, 360 Restaurant, Hagu Next Sports, and Master Construction.

He also extended his gratitude to Boarderline, The 670 Rock Steady Shop, Mobil Kagman Hannam Market, The Flair Bar, and MHS Production for contributing to the event becoming a big hit.

The Trench Tech official, however, reserved the biggest thank you to mixed martial arts enthusiasts who came in droves to watch the 14 scheduled fights at the Royal Taga Hall of the Saipan World Resort.

"I would also like to give a big thank you to all the MMA fans who supported the show!"

More than four hours of slam-bang action constituted Rites of Passage 7 with former Pacific Xtreme Championship heavyweight titleholder Manny "The Enforcer" Chong of Guam dominating Ton "Peskadot" Robert of Saipan in the main event.

The semi main events were also not shabby with topnotch Guamanian fighters Justin "The Shocker" Cruz and Jesse "The Spiderman" Taitano defeating Saipan fighters Derrick "El Peligro" Rangamar and "Taby" Jay Muna, respectively.

Other winners of the Saturday fight night were Slade "The Rage" Adelbai, Ray "Infamous" Apiag, Tyler Perrot, Louie Crisostomo, Chris "No Luv" Laayug, Giovanni "Palaxi" Sablan, Eddie Paulis, Mark "The Dark" Nuique, Junjie "Tiger" Choi, Johji "Akuma" Matsunaga, and Lee "Quick" Reyes. The latter actually didn't fight as his opponent was a no-show.

PELELIU

From Page 28

Despite the loss, Lancheros remained in second place in the team standings.

Choll Aces 15, Salty Boys 10

In the second game, second baseman Felix Romoket went 3-for-4 and scored three runs and five RBIs to lift Choll Aces to a 15-10 win over Salty Boys.

Choll Aces tallied five runs apiece in the second and third, and sixth inning. Romoket had a two-run single in the second and did it again at the top of the sixth inning.

Centerfielder Lucian George also went 3-for-4 and had four RBIs.

Choll Aces moved from fourth to solo third place with their 4-2 record. Salty Boys absorbed their third loss in six games and were relegated to fourth place.

IT&E 4, Kagman Jacks 2

In a low-scoring match, IT&E Dolphins escaped with a 4-2 triumph over Kagman Jacks to remain on top of the seven-team field.

The Dolphins are still unbeaten in six games to strengthen their hold to the No. 1 spot, while Kagman is second to the last in the team standings with its 1-5 slate.

IT&E scored two runs off Kagman's errors in the fourth inning, added more in the fifth on Tom Diaz's solo homer, and another one in the sixth on Kagman's miscue, anew.

Kagman made it to the scoreboard in the third inning on an Ed Flores' sacrifice out and logged its second run in the fourth on a Dolphins' error.

All's OK for Roger in Top Pool Bar 8-ball

Roger "The Ghost" Espiritu returned to his masterful ways by winning last Saturday's Top Pool Bar 8-Ball Billiards Tournament at the Garapan sports bar and watering hole.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

James scores 37 as Cavs stay alive

LeBron James made a new guarantee: Game 6.

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Bayani slips past VisMinda

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Bayani capitalized on VisMinda's fourth-quarter collapse to notch a 99-91 debut win in the 7th United Filipino Organization Inter-Organizational Basketball League Thursday night at JP Center Basketball Court in Garapan.

Bayani outran and outgunned VisMinda in the payoff period with Ryan Sanciangco and Darwin Barbo at the forefront of the former's offensive attack. Sanciangco drilled 14 points in the fourth quarter and made two big triples that allowed Bayani to pull away in the last seven minutes of the game. Barbo added eight markers and was pretty impressive from the foul line, going 11-for-14 overall and 4-for-6 in the final canto.

VisMinda was still in the game at the end of the third period, behind by only a point, 65-66. An 11-2 run capped by Sanciangco's first triple in the fourth smelled trouble for VisMinda, as Bayani took a double-digit lead, 77-67.

Bayani made it a 17-point lead, 88-71, after big man Ronald Delos Reyes canned his fourth triple of the night and Sanciango nailed his second in another 11-4 Bayani run.

VisMinda cut the lead to eight, 83-91, going into the last two minutes of the game, and could have moved closer but Nate Mateo hurriedly pulled up for a triple and missed. Bayani answered with a fastbreak layup from Sanciangco and a split free throw from Jun Tabora to seal the win.

The VisMinda-Bayani tiff was a see-saw battle in the first half with the latter taking a two-point lead after the first period, 18-16. VisMinda took the driver's seat at halftime 40-37, behind Errol Pere-

See BAYANI on Page 27

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Bayani's Darwin Barbo, right, is guarded by VisMinda's Jawn Joyner during their debut game in the UFO caging Thursday night at the JP Center Basketball Court in Garapan.

Peleliu stuns Lancheros

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Peleliu pulled off the biggest win in last weekend's 2009 Belau Masters Slow-pitch Softball League, stunning Lancheros, 5-3, Sunday at the Dandan Elementary School Ballfield.

The victory was only the second in six games for Peleliu, which handed Lancheros their second loss in seven games.

A three-run top of the sixth allowed Peleliu to take the lead, 5-2. The game was tied at 2-all after five complete innings with Mabel Ngirgemelas blasting a two-run homer at the top of the fourth to put Peleliu in the scoreboard. Rightfielder Ed Cabrera nailed a two-run double at the bottom of the second for Lancheros, who took a 3-2 lead at the bottom of the fifth on Cabrera's sacrifice fly.

After Peleliu grab the lead in the sixth inning, Lancheros must make at least two runs at bottom of the last inning to stay in the game. Lancheros scored none after the first two batters were beaten to second and third base, respectively, and the fourth one flied out to second base.

See PELELIU on Page 27

Villafria to train in RP before going to Japan

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Run 4 Ron II organizer Ronald Villafria, center, poses with the lucky winners of Docomo Pacific and IT&E cellular phones Salvador Naul and Filomena Bautista. Both are Villafria's co-employees at Coco Restaurant.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Filipino runner Ronald Villafria will warm up for his second stint in the Fuji Tozan Race this July by taking part in a couple of middle distance races in the Philippines.

Fresh from the successfully holding of his Run 4 Ron II fundraiser to finance his trip to Japan, the Olongapo, Philippines native said he will be competing in two 10-kilometer races when he visits Manila next month.

He said this will serve as his training for the 36-kilometer Fuji Tozan Race, more popularly known as the Mt. Fuji Marathon.

From the Philippines, Villafria will fly to Tokyo in July 20 and will stay at the Imperial Palace to train for the next five days before proceeding to Mt. Fuji, situated at the border of Shizuoka and Yamanashi prefectures.

Currently, Villafria is preparing for the Mt. Fuji Marathon by running four hours a day, four times week. He said he is also keen in taking part in the 10th Turquoise Blue Triathlon

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MARK RABAGO

Former Pacific Xtreme Championship heavyweight titleholder Manny "The Enforcer" Chong, right, of Guam in action against Ton "Peskadot" Robert of Saipan in the main event of last Saturday's Rites of Passage 7: Fists of Fury at the Saipan World Resort's Royal Taga Hall.

Cuki thanks supporters of ROP 7

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Trench Tech president Cuki Alvarez was ecstatic on the turnout of last Saturday' Rites of Passage 7: Fists of Fury and thanked all the companies and individuals that made the mixed martial arts event a success.

"Saturday's event was great! Good turnout of fight fans even though there were a lot of other events happening that night—NMC graduation, Taste of the Marianas, a couple of weddings, and etc.," he said.

Alvarez said Rites of Passage 7 wouldn't have been possible without the help of main sponsors

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